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LITERARY SUPPLEMENT

THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION

The Week-end Review

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THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION—The Week-end Review. *Incorporating The New Statesman, The Nation and Athenaeum, Week-end Review.*

THE destruction of Guernica, the ancient capital of the Basque lands and an "open town," was a piece of "frightfulness" which has left the world aghast. Not only was the town razed to the ground, and its defenders wiped out ; thousands of non-combatants—men, women and children—were blown to pieces, roasted alive in the blazing buildings, or even pursued by aeroplanes into the surrounding fields and there mown down. It was, in fact, a foretaste of what we have been taught to believe will be the experience of millions of us in the next big war. The Basque Government lays the charge for this massacre on the German G.H.Q. at Deva. General Franco denies that his air force had anything to do with it ; the Reds who fired Irun and Eibar are those who have burned Guernica—and so, he asserts with superb effrontery, President Aguirre, "who is guilty of associating with Communists," is the really responsible person! Is Bilbao itself now threatened with a like fate? The communiqués report the continued advance of the rebel forces, and General Mola professes to be confident of his success. But the defenders of Bilbao appear to be still in good heart. Their fears of famine have been relieved by the supplies brought in by the British food-ships, and plans are in hand for the evacuation of the civil population. A considerable force of aeroplanes which arrived from Valencia on Tuesday has given the Basque Government good hopes of holding their own in the air.

Retreat from N.D.C.

Both the proposed tax on "excess profits" and the personal prestige of the Chancellor have already suffered badly under a barrage of criticism which is partly reasonable and partly prejudiced. Impressed apparently by the weight of City opposition, Mr. Chamberlain hastened on Tuesday to announce two concessions ; both the "base period" for measuring "standard profits" and the "standard" percentage of untaxable earnings on capital would, he said, be given more flexibility in the Finance Bill. He hinted, too, that "capital" might ultimately be defined in a way more congenial than industrialists had been led to suppose. The effect of these modifications and the tax's still unresolved anomalies and inequities are examined by "Dives" in our City columns. The Chancellor has partially reassured the business world, which now hopes that the tax can be still further whittled down ; but politically his stock has slumped. Talk of a Tory revolt which would force

Mr. Chamberlain to jettison "N.D.C." or resign is beside the mark. From the point of view of the majority of the younger Conservatives, the opposition to the tax in the House has savoured too much of Big Business at its most hard-faced. No supporter of the Government is ready to join in making a "crisis" on the eve of the Coronation, or in wrecking a Chamberlain administration at the risk of putting Mr. Attlee in Downing Street. Moreover, as Prime Minister designate, Mr. Chamberlain is a potential distributor of the sweets of office. Nevertheless, Tory opinion is hardening against what is held to be a first-class *gaffe* on the Chancellor's part. He is bitterly criticised for having concocted on his own, and introduced in a half-baked state, a disturbing proposal which he must now modify drastically at the cost of appearing "weak." His statement on Tuesday that he had mentioned 1933–35 as a base period for standard profits only "because one must mention something" left his back benches gasping.

The Independence of Belgium

Mr. Eden's visit to Brussels, if it has not changed the position on the European chess-board, has done a good deal towards clarifying it. There is still uncertainty about the next move, but at least we understand—and Herr Hitler should understand—what Belgium means. Belgium wants to avoid being drawn into the quarrels of her powerful neighbours, and she believes that in her own and also in the general interest a policy of "independence" is imperative. She is, therefore, to be released from her old Locarno obligations, while her independence and integrity are to be guaranteed by the Great Powers. This, in all the circumstances, Britain and France were bound to accept, even if reluctantly. But it was and is important to know what Belgium would undertake on her own behalf—whether she would put herself in a state to resist aggression on her own territory, and whether she would continue to be bound by her League obligations. On these two questions she has now given definite assurances; she will not accede to the demand that she shall leave the League as a condition of Germany's guarantee of her independence. There is some doubt whether such a demand has been made by Germany. It is, at any rate, clear now that it will be useless to insist on it. If Hitler really wants peace (and there are signs that developments at home and abroad are driving him willy-nilly that way) he can secure it on fair terms.

The Indian Deadlock

The deadlock in India is still unresolved. The Congress Working Committee has been debating the situation, and reports from Allahabad suggest that the predominant view is unfavourable to any compromise with the British Government. Mr. Butler, the Under-Secretary for India, while rejecting Mr. Gandhi's proposal of an "arbitral tribunal," stated emphatically in the House of Commons on Monday that H.M. Government had no intention of countenancing the use of special powers by the Provincial Governors for other than the purposes for which Parliament intended them. This, however, has left the Congress Committee cold. Mr. Gandhi appears for the moment to have been lying low; but he has been asked to draft a new resolution for further discussion. The Indian Liberals, in general, seem less hopeful, though some of them—Sir Sivaswamy Iyer, for example—suggest that "the gulf is narrowing." The position is absurd. Both sides are standing on punctilio, and one must give way. If the working of the new Constitution is so important as it is generally assumed to be in this country, and if the "gulf" is really so narrow as Sir Sivaswamy Iyer and many others believe, we cannot see why the British Government should not come off their high horse. Do they seriously think they would suffer a bad—or any—loss of prestige by satisfying what is after all a very moderate demand on the part of the Indian nationalists?

Dr. Schuschnigg in Venice

The attempt of certain Italian newspapers, after the Venice meeting of Dr. Schuschnigg with Signor Mussolini, to assume that the former had made far-reaching concessions to the Austrian Nazis (the falsehood of which seems sufficiently proved by Dr. Schuschnigg's own energetic *démenti* and the logical trend of his policy) was a first-class sensation in Central Europe last week-end. It is worth noting that the better relations now existing between Austria and Czechoslovakia, which have been troubling Rome as well as Berlin, have not only a political, but also a realistic cash basis. It has been clear for some time that the course of the Spanish civil war, British rearmament, and the closeness of Anglo-French co-operation have considerably weakened the influence of Germany and Italy in Central Europe in general and in Austria in particular. Italy's change of front about the Habsburgs was at the same time a symptom of this and a stimulant of Austria's doubts. Equally important is the fact that leading Austrian financial and economic experts are of the opinion that Austria, in order to profit to the full from the developing trade boom, must "free" her trade from exchange restrictions, tariffs and quotas. It is not in her interest to direct her trade extensively towards Italy and Germany, whose economic systems are on an extremely narrow war basis, but rather towards Czechoslovakia and other European countries still trading on a comparatively liberal basis. It remains to be seen how far the discussions in Venice have helped or hindered Dr. Schuschnigg to pursue his independent policy in this sense. The Italo-Jugoslav Treaty, which menaces Austria's exports, and the failure of the Austro-German Trade Treaty of January to work out anything like as favourably as was hoped are no doubt reasons for his pushing on in spite of veiled threats from other interested capitals.

The C.I.O. Scores Again

The Committee for Industrial Organisation has won, on points, two more rounds in its battle with American Big Business. One of the Ford plants has agreed, despite Mr. Ford's brave words about the iniquity of Trade Unionism, to negotiate with the Automobile Workers' Union; and the Carnegie Steel Corporation, following the lead of the Harvester Combine and several other big corporations, has formally withdrawn support from its private "company union." Now that the Labour Relations Act has been upheld by the Supreme Court, it is illegal for employers to dictate to their workers the organisation to which they are to belong; and the entire system of

"company unions," on which the big corporations have spent so much money and effort, is already beginning to crumble. There are rumours of minimum wage laws, hours of labour laws, and other industrial legislation shortly to be promoted; but the President may prefer to leave these over till the fate of his proposals for the reform of the Supreme Court itself has been settled by the Senate. In the meantime, the C.I.O. is forging ahead rapidly, and the American Federation of Labour is as powerless as Big Business to check its advance.

The Struggle for Factory Reform

The Factories Bill is grinding its way through Standing Committee, and various important amendments have been rejected, as we feared they would be. Amongst these are the proposals to raise the age of entry into industry to 15, to include men in the scope of the Bill, to reduce women's hours to a lower figure than 48 and those of juveniles to 40 per week. On this last point a number of Government supporters ranged themselves with the Opposition, and Mr. Wakefield in particular warned the Home Secretary that the rejection of the 40-hour week for young persons was a serious obstacle to the work of the Physical Fitness Council. Sir John Simon has promised a concession; juveniles' hours will be reduced to 42 or 44—the figure is not yet decided on. But even this, it seems, is to be nullified by a clause permitting exemption on three grounds, just as a similar proviso has nullified the raising of the school age in the Education Act. On Tuesday an amendment to abolish all overtime for young persons under 18 was defeated. Here again the Home Secretary suggested some feeble modifications. Overtime might be prohibited, he said, where it could be shown that it would be injurious to health; and, on representations to the Home Office, an inquiry might be held to ascertain whether an industry would really be ruined by the prohibition of overtime for boys and girls. This plea of the "ruin" of industry is, of course, a time-hallowed (or fly-blown) argument against substantial reform. And as to the other question, we should say that a civilised community ought to be in no two minds about the injuriousness of overtime for adolescents under 18.

The Busmen's Holiday

While Lord Ashfield and Mr. Bevin have been holding all-day sessions in London, with the help of the Ministry of Labour, in an attempt to avert the threatened strike of the London busmen, the unofficial bus strikes have been spreading rapidly throughout the Eastern Counties. These local stoppages have not the support of the Union; and in certain cases they involve breaches of the agreements dealing with methods of negotiation between the Union and the various companies. But by some companies the Union is not recognised, and in other instances there is no established procedure for settling conditions. When a strike starts in one centre where obviously unsatisfactory conditions exist it spreads easily to others—especially where the areas served by different companies overlap, so as to make the services to some extent competitive. It is important to notice that, while in some of the strikes wages are the principal issue, in quite a number, including London, the chief dispute centres round hours of labour and the increasing strain of time-schedules under modern traffic conditions. The strain of driving in the streets of London and other big towns has immensely increased, and it can hardly be denied that the busmen have as strong a case as any body of operatives for demanding the forty-hour week.

Coal Royalties

The long-contested battle over the nationalisation of mining royalties is at last virtually ended. To the disappointment of the royalty owners, who had stuck out for £112,000,000 (25 years' purchase) and had apparently at one time been offered by the Treasury £75,000,000, representing 17 years' purchase, the Arbitration Tribunal appointed by the Government with the owners' agreement has assessed the value of the royalties at £66,450,000, or 15 years' purchase. In view of coal's lost supremacy in the fuel world, the terms are not unfair to the royalty owners, who would certainly not have realised more by selling in the open market. But in one sense the Government has made a good bargain. The royalty income which will now accrue to the State annually is £4,430,000—a figure which will leave over a comfortable balance after interest is met on the bonds which the Government will have to place in order to buy out the owners' titles. This balance ought to be applied exclusively for the miners' benefit. There is, however, one way in which the surplus may be diminished. The national average royalty paid is roughly 5½*d.* per ton, but in certain districts—e.g., South Wales—it is over 8½*d.* per ton. There will be a strong demand from these districts that their royalties should be scaled down to the national average when the property now acquired by the nation is publicly administered.

Tension at Harworth

Something like a local war has developed at Harworth during the past week, as a result, first, of conflicts over picketing and, subsequently, of what look like very ill-advised steps by the police to arrest men charged with picketing offences not quietly at home, but in the full publicity of a miners' "social." There has been breaking of heads; and charges and counter-charges are to be made in the police court, in which Sir Stafford Cripps is announced to appear in the miners' defence. Meanwhile, attempts continue through the Ministry of Labour to persuade the colliery owners to meet the Notts Miners' Association, which they have hitherto refused to recognise; and the threat of a national miners' strike, if a satisfactory settlement cannot be reached locally, still hangs over the industry. At Harworth feeling is running very high. Members of the Spencer Union can reach their work only under the escort of police, who have been drafted into the village in large numbers, and of whose arbitrary behaviour there are many complaints. The courts have wisely adjourned applications from the colliery owners for eviction orders against strikers occupying colliery houses. But unless a settlement is reached speedily there will certainly be worse troubles.

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BREAKERS AHEAD?

SIX years ago the world was plunging into an economic crisis whose severity led some observers to wonder whether the capitalist Humpty Dumpty could ever be replaced intact on his wall, or whether it might not be left for Communism, emerging from the indignation of ruined peoples, painfully to pick up the pieces. The slump passed; partly through the natural tendency of the human organism to keep swimming in the worst financial flood, but mainly because of monetary and public works policies adopted by Governments stirred by panic out of *laisser faire* preconceptions, world recovery has been setting in more and more strongly during the past two years. In Great Britain and the U.S.A., where return to "normalcy" came earliest and proceeded most rapidly, conditions describable as those of "semi-boom" began to develop last winter. Producers of commodities, manufacturers and, above all, stock market operators, were then cheerfully calculating on prosperity for at least a couple of years ahead. Prices of raw materials and securities were heavily discounting this roseate prospect.

During the past fortnight the picture, at least for the moment, has radically changed. Threats by President Roosevelt of action against inflation of prices, rumours that the U.S.A. Government intended to "put back more gold" into the dollar, the discovery that many "weak" speculators had unexpectedly large market commitments, the announcement by the British Chancellor of a disturbing new tax on profits—all combined to bring about on the world's bourses a cumulative fall in values comparable almost with that of the early days of the 1931–33 slump. Have estimates of the probable duration of so-called "prosperity" to be revised? Is the date of the next downward turn of the economic cycle to be placed, not two years, but only a few months ahead? Is the stock market *malaise* once again a forerunner of an imminent crisis of capitalism? It is too soon yet to attempt to answer these questions decisively. So far as can be judged, the forces making for recovery on inflationary lines are still powerful: money remains cheap; the U.S. Treasury has not yet tightened the purse-strings governing relief works expenditure; the demands of rearmament for materials, plant and labour will remain intense for many months ahead. A speculative "boomlet" excrescent on the upward trend has been burst, but there are no discernible signs yet that the present recovery is spent. When dismayed stock market operators have regained their temporarily lost equanimity, bourses will doubtless brighten once more.

Looking further ahead, however, other considerations arise; the long-run stability of our "prosperity" is very much in doubt. In his latest survey of the capitalist world, Mr. H. B. Butler of the International Labour Organisation sums up the odds. He is neither satisfied with the present economic situation nor reassuring about the future. He points out that the recovery of industrial production up to or beyond the level of 1929 has been unaccompanied by an equivalent increase in employment—even though in many countries there has been a considerable reduction in hours of work. He records the large increase in long-period unemployment, especially among older workers, and notes that the extent of unemployment seems to bear no relation to the size or density of population, but is likely in the future to be adversely affected by its changing age-distribution in the Western countries. The proportion of older people is increasing, but at the same time mechanised industry is setting a hotter pace, to which only the young can readily adapt themselves; and, even in occupations such as shop and office work, which older people could undertake efficiently, employers put a high and almost certainly growing premium upon youth.

In the circumstances, much unemployment would remain, even if there were no danger of a renewed slump. Moreover, the prospective decline of population in most of the industrial countries is calculated to make unemployment worse, by denying that expanding market which is necessary if workers displaced by mechanisation are to be reabsorbed. This prospect, of course, strengthens the case for a shorter working week; and Mr. Butler produces an impressive array of examples, showing what has already been achieved towards making 40 hours the new standard, to replace the 48 hours which became in effect the standard after 1918. He feels no doubt that the shorter working week will be permanent; the experience of shorter hours during the slump has made the workers determined not to give it up, and also convinced many employers that, under mechanical conditions, it has much to recommend it.

But if in these respects Mr. Butler is optimistic, he is far less so about the stability of the present economic recovery. He sees clearly that revival cannot advance much further on sound lines without a large-scale restoration of international trade. Some small steps have indeed already been made by Governments towards the liberalisation of commercial conditions. The United States has made, on the basis of the Most Favoured Nation Clause, a large number of bilateral agreements for tariff reductions. The Dutch and Scandinavians have again been moving significantly towards the creation of a low-tariff group. The currency agreement between France, Great Britain and the United States has done much to restore confidence in the ability of the three countries to reconcile the claims of internal and international stability in the monetary sphere. But *autarky*, deeply influenced by the desire for self-sufficiency in case of war, still stands formidably in the way of any return of foreign trade to the dimensions necessary for the solution of the unemployment problem in the chief exporting countries.

War preparation is dealing even heavier blows at world prosperity in other ways. Mr. Butler admits that, in time of slump, expenditure on armaments serves, like any other form of public works, to expand employment, especially if it is financed in such a way as to expand the monetary supply. Even so, it has the grave disadvantage of creating no values that will contribute towards liquidating in the future the debts incurred in financing it; it gives a desirable stimulus to production, but in an extremely undesirable way.

The position, however, is wholly different when intensive rearmament is being pursued at a time of economic expansion. Then too it swells in some degree the total of present activity; but to an increasing extent it causes a diversion of resources from more to less productive uses, raises prices and damps down expansion in other fields, and, above all, gives the entire economy a twist which

makes severe crisis unavoidable the moment the process of rearmament stops or is greatly slackened off. All the leading and some of the lesser countries are at present running headlong into this danger. They are getting into a position in which they cannot stop rearming on an ever expanding scale without throwing many hundreds of thousands of workers on the streets and condemning themselves to yet another major economic crisis.

With the prospect of another slump—not imminent, but likely, when it arrives, to be accentuated by the economic distortion involved in world-wide rearmament—thus confronting us, there are two main demands which can legitimately be made of the British Government. First, that it should adopt a positive instead of an obstructionist attitude towards all projects for the liberalising of international trade. So long as Britain sabotages every attempt of other countries to form low-tariff groups by clinging obstinately to its Most Favoured Nation treaty rights, little or no progress can be made in reducing customs barriers. Nor is there much chance of a resumed world economic conference achieving useful results in freeing commerce from its shackles of quantitative restriction until the policy embodied in the Ottawa Agreements is sensibly modified. For discussion of such modification the Imperial Conference this month affords an opportunity.

But there is another direction in which the British Government should give a lead if it desires and hopes to mitigate the severity of the economic recession which lies ahead. An obvious way to stave off the coming of traditional capitalist crisis and to provide a cushion against the impingement of another slump is to raise the standard of living and "spread" purchasing power by more equitable distribution of wealth. Mr. Butler believes that, during the next few years, more and more countries will resort to legislation dealing with the minimum wage, the working week, holidays with pay, sickness and unemployment insurance, retiring pensions for elderly workers, and a number of other reforms; and there will be increasing need for international conventions dealing with conditions in particular industries—for miners, textile workers, seafarers, and many other groups. Therein he is almost certainly right; and it is a thousand pities the British Government cannot be persuaded of his rightness. For if Great Britain, instead of hanging behind, would put her influence at the head of the group of countries which are endeavouring to secure better international standards of employment, the pace of progress could undoubtedly be very much increased.

Emphatically it is to our interest that standards of living throughout the world should rise as fast as possible. We want to sell high quality products in the world market; and for that we need well-off buyers. Yet, instead of helping, Great Britain systematically obstructs every advance that is proposed, and the British Government's vote at Geneva is cast almost always on the reactionary side. No policy could be better devised to ensure that when our precarious "prosperity" passes with the passing of the peak of rearmament activity, the ensuing slump—in plain words, deficiency of purchasing power in relation to expanded output capacity—will be such as once again to invite the emergence of those political tendencies which Mr. Baldwin and Colonel Blimp alike most fear and deplore.

THE SHADOW OF CLICHY

THE Blum Government has come into conflict with a large part of the Paris working class, and the next few weeks—or perhaps even the next few days—will show whether this conflict can be satisfactorily settled. The situation is a dramatic one, and one can well believe that M. Blum is feeling it very keenly—though hardly to the point of wishing to throw up the premiership in despair, as the press of the Right continues to suggest. What is at the back of all this working-class discontent, and of the challenge the C.G.T. leaders have thrown at the Front Populaire Government?

At St. Nazaire, on February 24th, Blum uttered for the first time the word "pause"; he said that a "pause" in the increase of public expenditure, of the burdens of industry and of prices had become necessary, "so that we may consolidate the ground we have already conquered." During those days the cost of living was rapidly rising, and was threatening to swallow up a large part of the benefits that wage-earners had derived during the previous eight months. Worse still, the financial situation had become extremely precarious. Two days later, this became particularly obvious during the Chamber debate on the Government's economic policy. Flandin and Paul Reynaud prophesied catastrophe and disaster, and Fernand Laurent, another member of the Opposition, disclosed, on the strength of reports from London, that the Bank of France had steadily been losing a milliard francs of gold a week. Vincent Auriol, the Finance Minister, murmured an embarrassed and ambiguous denial. In his speech that night Blum maintained that the country was steadily recovering its economic health, but admitted that capital was not giving the Government the support to which it was entitled, for "the Front Populaire Government," he said, "is the true National Government of France. . . . I do not wish to think of the measures that may have to be taken if this support is denied us." Here was a clear threat to introduce exchange control if capital continued to be exported. But the "capitalists" were not to be intimidated; for they knew that Blum would not apply such a measure, since it would mean the end of the Anglo-Franco-American declaration of September 25th, which is an essential feature of Blum's foreign policy of keeping on the closest possible terms with England and the United States. During those days not only big capitalists, but almost anybody, bought pound notes and Belgian francs; for with the franc pegged to 105 to the £, such "speculation" or "investment" was as good as a safe bet. M. Labeyrie, the Governor of the Bank of France, and also certain members of the Government itself, were favourable to exchange control; but they received a strong warning from London against taking such a course, which, they were told, would seriously affect Franco-British co-operation; and this warning played an important part in the events of March 5th. That was the day of Blum's "surrender to the financial oligarchy," as the Left-wing extremists were to call it. The measures on which the Government decided that day were:

> The abolition of the legislation against "gold profiteers";
> The appointment of a new committee, including M. Rist, to manage the exchange equalisation fund;
> A pledge to reduce the outstanding Treasury deficit of the year from 32 to 26 milliard francs; and
> A *garantie de change* loan, the amount of which was fixed by the Senate at 10½ milliards a few days later.

The reduction of expenditure was largely to be carried out by shelving the public works programmes; M. Rist had insisted on this very strongly, for, in his view, the creation of artificial purchasing power in this manner had become unnecessary and even harmful at a time when industrial production was lagging behind consumption.

The loan, the terms of which were, no doubt, over generous, was subscribed in two days; and although the banks did most of the buying, the moral effect of the loan's success was considerable. It looked as though financial confidence had

suddenly been restored; and during the days that followed the tide of capital turned in France's favour.

Blum, despite his violent outbursts when he was Leader of the Opposition, is at heart a reformist Socialist; and he was thoroughly pleased with the effect of the decisions his Government had taken on March 5th. He felt that he had restored financial confidence, without giving away too much; and that, in the long run, all this would be to the good of everybody, including the working class. By a strange irony, Blum, wearing full evening dress, was listening at the opera to a concert of British music conducted by Sir Thomas Beecham when the news of the rioting at Clichy reached him. He was overwhelmed by the news. "We did not deserve this," he exclaimed. He drove straight to the Clichy Hospital, where his Secretary, M. Blumel, wounded by a police bullet, was lying in a serious condition; and Blum's white tie and evening cloak contrasted grimly with the bloodstained caps and clothes of the wounded rioters. Blum must have been more conscious of the contrast than anybody else.

"Not for ten years had France been in a stronger position nor had the economic outlook been more promising than on the eve of Clichy," Blum bitterly complained a few days later. He had good reason to complain. For Clichy became a symbol of the latent revolutionary temper of the Paris working class and of their "rebellion" against the Blum Government. It showed that this revolutionary temper had been underrated, that the spirit which had invented the stay-in strike nine months earlier was as strong as ever, and that the Paris working class—or at least certain important elements in it—were not prepared to swallow the "pause." The Clichy demonstration was held officially against "the occupation of Clichy by the Fascist troops of La Rocque"; but this "occupation" amounted to no more than a private cinema show attended by some 200 ex-Croix de Feu men and their families; and La Rocque was little more than an excuse. The demonstration, organised by the local mayor, councillor general and deputy, all competing among themselves in "extremism," was in reality a demonstration of discontent with the Blum Government; and this became pretty clear when the arrival on the scene of the riots of M. Dormoy, Blum's Minister of the Interior, was greeted with loud cries of "*Dormoy, démission!*"

The six hours' general strike two days later was, in reality, another demonstration of hostility against a Government which, in the words of the *Libertaire*, the anarchist paper, "had been guilty of shedding the blood of the workers." Both Blum and Jouhaux had tried in vain to prevent the strike. And that same night, Thorez, the Communist leader, thundered at the Vélodrome d'Hiver against "Governments of the Left which carry out a policy of the Right."

There has been trouble ever since. The Exhibition has become another symbol of Labour's unsympathetic attitude to the Blum Government. The workers there have practised ca'canny, have ignored Blum's appeals to speed up the work; they have also amused themselves by irritating the authorities and the bourgeois public by flying Front Populaire flags at the top of the most inaccessible buildings. This caused an outcry in the Right press, which said that, in Blum's own words, the Exhibition belonged to the whole nation, and not to the Front Populaire. In the upshot, the Exhibition is fully a month overdue. It opens on May 26th, but will scarcely be in good shape until June 15th.

One can sympathise with the workers of the Exhibition; for the building trade is terribly depressed, and the men, afraid of being out of work once the Exhibition is finished, want the work to last as long as possible. It is probable that the Government will be obliged to guarantee them re-employment; failing which the men may simply "occupy" the Exhibition. But, whatever the merits of their case, their defiant and frankly revolutionary attitude has had a depressing effect on the general public. The Bourse has been slumping from one low record to another. But the matter would be less important if the difficulties were only limited to the 26,000 workers of the Exhibition. The truth is that a very large proportion of the working-class rank and file is extremist and revolutionary in temper. We have lately heard a great deal about various extremist organisations—anarchist and Leninist and Trotzkyist—all "more to the Left than the Communists," and of the "Revolutionary Left" of M. Marceau Pivert within the Socialist Party itself—an organisation whose dissolution was decided upon at the meeting of the National Council of the Socialist Party at Puteaux last week. Actually, there is no such thing as a single organised extremist party, but local extremist leaders and agitators are scattered throughout the rank and file, and the revolutionary syndicalist and anarchist traditions of the pre-war Trade Union movement, with their contempt for progressive democracy and for "normal" relations with the employers, are particularly strong in the Paris working class to-day. I say "Paris," rather than "French," for outside Paris these tendencies are less strong. The Trade Union and Communist leaders, afraid of losing their grip on the working class, are obliged to play up to the extremists. Hence a speech like M. Jouhaux's at Vincennes last Saturday, which was as good as an ultimatum to the Government and a formal rejection of the "pause," a "pause" which the extremists regard as a conspiracy against the working class and against their determination to carry out what Jouhaux calls "the peaceful and orderly revolution" that began in June, 1936. Among other things—such as a sliding scale for wages, the non-increase in bus and metro fares, and old age pensions—Jouhaux advocated a loan of 10 milliard francs for financing a vast public works programme. While the demand for old age pensions is clearly justified, the demand for a 10 milliard loan raises a far more difficult problem. Jouhaux is a determined advocate of a "closed economy," and he could never forgive Blum his choice of the "liberal" solution, a choice which involved the sacrifice of public works. Jouhaux is fully aware that in a closed economy public works are much easier to finance; and he does not hesitate to advocate for the purpose the use of labour bonds, or, in other words, disguised inflation, very much after the model of Dr. Schacht's labour bonds. Although Jouhaux used a demagogic phrase (in alluding to the *garantie de change* Defence Loan)—"Ten milliards may be found in three days to finance death. Can one find nothing to finance life?"—it is clear that on this question the conflict between the C.G.T. and the Government is fundamental, a conflict between two economic systems. Vincent Auriol has rejected the proposed 10 milliard loan as something impracticable.

No less alarming from a purely democratic point of view is the general attitude of the C.G.T. leaders to the Government: "We demand . . . we shall impose." This attitude takes no account of parliamentary possibilities; if Parliament is unwilling, it must be bullied by threats of labour trouble till it *is* willing. The parliamentary basis of the Blum Government is the Front Populaire programme; Jouhaux clearly intimated on Saturday that he wished it to go beyond it. The point is significant.

The middle classes, and the *petite bourgeoisie* in particular, are becoming restive. They are rebelling against the C.G.T.'s insistence that the 40-hour week be applied on the "5 times 8" basis—that is, with two closing days a week for shops, offices, banks, etc. A lockout is threatened for similar reasons in the hotel and catering trade. And there is a lot more trouble in store. There is a conviction among the bourgeoisie that the legal action taken against La Rocque after Clichy was largely dictated to the Government by C.G.T. pressure. This is not quite the case; but the bourgeoisie's conviction that it is so, and that La Rocque is a victim of arbitrary action, may restore in their eyes some of his lost prestige. It is a comparatively small matter, but one which is of psychological importance.

There is reason to suppose that the Communists will, for a large number of reasons, continue to support the Blum Government in Parliament, even though they continue to criticise it outside, so as to "keep in" with the "labouring

masses." The Radicals, if one is to believe M. Campinchi, their leader at the Chamber, will also go on supporting it, for as Campinchi said:

> Far from wishing to profit from the present grave difficulties, the Radicals fear that they may be fatal to the country; and they consider it to be in the interests of the country that they should help the Government to solve these difficulties.

But the danger is that, even if Blum is supported by Parliament, his difficulties may not be at an end. For, as far as Paris is concerned, the real battle is no longer fought in Parliament, but outside. Will he succeed in calming these conflicting forces outside Parliament? That is the great question. For it is no use denying that French democracy is to-day passing through another fairly serious crisis. And the Paris working class, which received so much sympathy and support from public opinion as a whole during the strikes last June, is in danger of losing that sympathy. If this crisis is not rapidly solved, it may also have regrettable international consequences.

ALEXANDER WERTH

Paris, April 27th.

A LONDON DIARY

I LIKE Mr. Attlee's suggestion that Sir John Simon, the future Chancellor of the Exchequer, should in his present office imitate Mr. Neville Chamberlain's Budget policy. In that case, Mr. Attlee points out, Sir John would take all the police off the streets during the Coronation, and let the pickpockets know that they have a free hand provided they give the Government a rake-off. However, even this policy has alarmed the pickpockets, who want the free hand without the rake-off. Mr. Neville Chamberlain is to climb down, as this Government always does when it meets resistance from the Right. I am reminded of a charming little creature called a "paramoecium" whose habits have been described to me by a biologist. It is one of the *infusoria* and may be found in puddles. Its defence mechanism is remarkable. On meeting some types of resistance it throws out a large number of poisonous hairs in all directions. But its usual pattern of behaviour if it encounters an obstacle is to retreat just twice its own length and then to go off at an angle of forty-five degrees.

* * *

Personally, I should soon be tired out if I had to drive an ordinary light car for eight hours a day along an open road. Watching bus drivers in the thick petrol fumes of crowded streets, pulling round their wheels, tugging at their gears, starting and stopping, and then speeding to make up their time schedules, I am amazed that they manage it at all, and that the percentage of accidents is not still higher. I gather that gastritis and other forms of nervous illness are increasingly common amongst them. As it is frequently said that the strike crisis has been deliberately brought on by "extremists" on the eve of the Coronation, I thought I would see what the extremists had to say for themselves in the *Daily Worker*. I found an article by Mr. A. F. Papworth, who is a member of the executive of the Transport Workers and, I suppose, a Communist. He made a very reasonable case. Busmen's hours have remained the same since 1919 in spite of the increased strain. Their demands have been discussed ever since July, 1935. "Kings have come and gone since the talks began." That Coronation Day should come so soon after the date fixed for the strike, Mr. Papworth declares only to be an accident. But it is an accident that may count a good deal. The Government are extremely anxious to prevent a hold-up and a demonstration of internal disunity in Coronation week and they are likely to insist on a solution, even if it costs them money.

* * *

Greed is bringing its own reward. News of the fantastic prices that London intended to charge for the Coronation season has effectively reduced the demand. A West-end hotel was asking four hundred guineas a week for a suite (including breakfast): I doubt if they are getting it and I'm not sure that restaurants are doing good business for themselves by cancelling their ordinary meals and providing exclusively for £3 3s. dinners during the Coronation week. There is actually less demand than in an ordinary year for West-end flats; after talking to London residents about 50 guineas a week as an easy price to get from American or "county" visitors, the agencies now admit that people are going on after the Coronation to the Paris Exhibition instead of staying for the London Season. The demand for tickets to see the procession itself is still very slow. Unless there is an immense rush at the last minute there will be many empty seats. Some of the smaller agents, I'm told, may try to reduce their losses by cutting the prices of seats during the final week; the bigger agencies, with reputations to lose, will probably refuse to cut prices, thinking financial loss less serious than the offence to clients who have already paid the full price. Obviously, all this deflation of the Coronation, in spite of an unprecedented amount of whoopee in the press, is due partly to greed and partly to the cold douche of the abdication.

* * *

I think people are secretly rather relieved at not having to strain their loyalty quite so much as they did a year or two ago. They take it all a bit more easily, willingly subscribe to the fund for the children to have a good tea and for the young people to dance in the evening, but without any of that hectic deification of monarchy which Colonel Blimp so much appreciated a year or two ago. People are not crowding to buy the innumerable souvenir goods from red, white and blue underclothing to pianos with red, white and blue notes. (They would buy these souvenirs even less if they knew how often they were produced—*Reynolds's* has given some interesting examples lately—under grossly sweated conditions, women working in back rooms twelve-hour days to make three shillings and children sitting up at night to substitute tiny pictures of King George for the original coloured portrait of King Edward.) Some Trade Unions have returned large blocks of Coronation seats offered them, and orthodox Labour shows signs of recovering from a period of excessive loyalty. The *Daily Herald* warns its public of the political uses of monarchy—though it does not go so far, of course, as the Communists, who in a well-produced pamphlet called *Parade of War*, suggest that the Government may take the opportunity of calling another General Election. (Of course, Communists may have inside information; but if I were Mr. Neville Chamberlain I'd regard my present majority as quite adequate.) No, England is far from Republican and will enjoy the Coronation Carnival, but it has certainly become more rational about the Monarchy.

* * *

On a visit to a select West-end hairdresser this week a lady of my acquaintance asked if it would not be advisable for her immediately to make her appointment for Coronation week. She imagined that there would be a terrific crush. "Oh no, Madam," said the hairdresser, "that is quite unnecessary. We shall be unusually free that week. My class of customer will be in the country during Coronation week."

* * *

An interesting piece of information reaches me from a friend who is on holiday in the South of France. The British ship, *Llandovery Castle*, which was mined some weeks ago off the Spanish coast, is now lying up in the harbour of Port Vendres. My friend met one of the officers of the *Llandovery Castle* who had seen pieces of the exploded mine. He said that the mine was stamped with the name of Armstrong-Whitworth. Various explanations are possible. It should be remembered that Armstrong-Whitworth's used to have a factory in Italy before the War.

* * *

Last Tuesday's decision of the Cambridge Union that "true national defence can only be effectively secured by individual refusal to bear arms and by complete disarmament,'

was almost as remarkable an event as the famous Oxford Union "King and Country" motion. True, the voting at Cambridge was close—94 to 90—and the attendance not very large. But the circumstances are different. Lord Ponsonby had to propose this uncompromising motion at a time when the Labour Party, as well as most of the rest of the world, has accepted rearmament and when events in Spain are testing the most determined pacifist. Union votes reflect the excellency of the speaking quite as much as the politics of the audience, but the vote is nevertheless something more than a straw in the wind.

* * *

Characteristically the German Embassy in London sends out its invitations in German and in a very difficult Gothic script. Rumour has it that the Iraqi Legation replied in Iraqi! Some day I hope a full record of Ribbentrop's adventures in this country will be written. He is the most efficient of anti-Nazi propagandists. The following story was actually related by somebody who was present on the occasion. An energetic and outspoken lady, sitting near to Ribbentrop at a dinner party, said, "Your Excellency, I think you are the worst Ambassador Germany has ever sent to England. You have got no sense of humour." Ribbentrop replied, "I assure you, you are quite wrong. I have an excellent sense of humour. Indeed, I am very proud of it. You should see me and the Führer at Berchtesgaden, rolling over and over on the ground together, roaring with laughter when one of us makes a joke." CRITIC

THIS ENGLAND

Our prize of 5/- for the contribution at the head of the column goes this week to R. D. Smith.

All cuttings should be addressed to "This England," 10 Great Turnstile, High Holborn, W.C.1.

Mrs. Bee, who is a widow of 69, living at 5 Gosling House, in Stepney, apologised for feeling rather tired this morning. She had been up all night, she explained, painting the linoleum in her kitchen red, white and blue. Now the flat is all red, white and blue—the chairs, the tables, the picture frames around photographs of the Royal Family, the floors, the fireplaces, even the spring of the bed. There are red, white and blue curtains, blankets, pillows, tablecloths and ornaments.—*Evening Standard.*

It must have been a very gory little scrap and the Gurkhas won it. The odds against them were 40 to 8, and it is easy to imagine how the little men licked their chops after it. That sort of thing was just their weather, and the humour of it, I am sure, appealed to them, knowing what merry little souls they are.—Account of fighting on the North-West Frontier in *Tatler.*

The *Times*, each month more Red, publishes a leader (16.4.37) gently admonishing the Red revolutionaries in Paris, advising them to have a little patience, and in time everything will fall into their hands.—*Action.*

I am well aware that more beautiful sights can be seen, but, somehow, even the Garden of the Tuileries cannot be compared to the meanest of London's gardens.—Letter in *Daily Telegraph.*

The Mayor said he was a great animal lover, and he detested people who were cruel to animals. "It is bad enough with children, but when it comes to dumb animals it is terrible," he said.—*Dorset County Chronicle.*

We modestly suggest that more can be done for democracy by wearing Corduroys than all the efforts of the politicians put together. Try a pair, you will like them. It's a man's trouser!—Advt. in Regent Street shop window.

The payment of Members of Parliament, which has turned a position of privilege and public service into that of paid hirelings.—*Evening Standard.*

THE FUTURE OF BRITISH FILMS

IN the House of Lords last Friday the Government put up a spokesman with an appropriately theatrical title to reply to a motion that steps should be taken to assist "the foundation on a firm basis" of a flourishing British film industry. The Captain of the Yeomen of the Guard, Lord Templemore, announced in winding up the debate that legislation would be introduced this year to extend the quota system of protection until 1948, and that "most careful consideration" was being given to the other recommendations contained in the report of the Moyne Committee. That report, it will be recalled, suggested that a qualitative standard should be required of British "quota films" and that finance at low rates of interest should be made available for approved undertakings. In view of past experience, cheap capital would be unobtainable without State backing.

That the future of British film production in the absence of State aid is gloomy needs little emphasis. Of the two major producing concerns, Gaumont-British has virtually suspended operations: certain G.B. films in an advanced state of production will be completed in co-operation with General Film Distributors, on a fifty-fifty cost basis; but no new projects, it is understood, are contemplated, and the company's producing organisation at Shepherd's Bush seems likely to be dispersed. The other leading company, London Films, has made such heavy losses on its pictures that doubts have been expressed in the City about its ability to continue producing indefinitely unless better financial results can be achieved. Ten years of quota protection have certainly resulted in an increased footage of films made in this country being screened by domestic exhibitors, but a "flourishing" British film industry is still far from being firmly established.

Before we decide, however, that the industry must be bolstered up by further Governmental assistance, we shall do well to consider first the exact nature of its existing weaknesses. The problem is admittedly in large part an economic one. But "the films" are peculiar in that they constitute not merely a large-scale capitalist business, involving huge financial commitments, but also a form (albeit highly commercialised) of art. Would anyone suggest State aid for British novelists because the circulating libraries were in danger of being "dominated" by foreign fiction? Before we accept the necessity for a State-subventioned "national" film industry, let us be sure that American film "domination" can be legitimately averted by this means, and that the results—aesthetically or sociologically, if you like—would be worth the price.

First, the economic side of the problem. The domestic market is represented by the demands of nearly 5,000 British cinema theatres, capitalised at about £9,000,000 and requiring for their patrons' entertainment over 8,000 "programmes" a week. Control of the more important theatres is somewhat highly centralised. The two leading cinema combines own between them 600 houses, and over 300 other theatres belong to four lesser groups. Apart from these "circuits," however, the exhibitors are strongly individualistic and unorganised, whereas the "renters"—i.e., wholesale distributors—are organised in a closely knit trade association. Annual takings from British audiences may be put at nearly £40,000,000, which is distributed roughly as follows:

Retained by exhibitors for cost of premises, overheads, etc., and profits	£20,000,000
Retained by renters for costs (distribution, advertising, multiplication of positives and manufacture and distribution of news-reels) and profits	£15,000,000
Balance transmitted to producers—	
American £8,000,000	
British £2,000,000	£10,000,000

Add, say, £500,000 accruing to British producers from foreign sales, and their total annual income may be estimated

to have recently been of the order of £2½ millions. Against this, their outgoings in 1935–36 probably averaged nearly £3½ millions. The extent to which they have been running "in the red" becomes at once apparent. On the other hand, the American producers, whose annual expenditure on productions other than news-reels may be placed at the equivalent of £30,000,000, netted over £25,000,000 from their domestic market (15,000 cinemas) and foreign sales outside the British Isles. Thus Britain's £8,000,000 contribution—a vital element in their finances—left them "on velvet."

Economically, the clue to the strength of the American film companies' hold over the British market is not difficult to detect. In the first place, their superior financial resources give them a virtual monopoly over the "stars" who, from the exhibitors' point of view, are safe box-office "winners." They alone, in contradistinction to their British producing competitors, can guarantee a *regular supply* of "feature" films, lavishly mounted and dressed, with castes of "names" reasonably certain to fill a London or provincial theatre for a week or more. As a consequence, the bargaining power of their British "renter" subsidiaries is strong. Quota provisions can be satisfied by manufacturing on this side of the Atlantic an adequate footage of cheap and artistically contemptible "quota quickies"; and though "blind" booking is nominally abolished by the Films Act, the American-controlled renter is in a position to say, under the rose, "If you will not agree to hire for exhibition my three next pictures A, B and C, you cannot have at your price my sure money-maker starring Greta Garbo." The argument is compelling.

Secondly, American film production—despite all the jibes at the extravagance of Hollywood's methods—is, foot for foot and quality of box-office appeal for quality, considerably cheaper than British. The huge organisations of the leading American producers embrace not merely actors and actresses under period contracts, but a "ready to hand" host of specialists—directors, camera-men and technicians—who can be switched from film to film without loss of time or money. British producing companies, on the other hand, have been obliged in most cases to "buy over" expensively from abroad their specialists, while "stars" have had to be purchased *ad hoc* for individual pictures on equally costly and wasteful terms. It should always be remembered that, from the aspect of cost of artistes, the British producer, now that the silent film has given way universally to "talkies," lacks the language advantage which his opposite number on the Continent enjoys. A French-speaking film star can, broadly speaking, sell his talents only in France. His notions of salary are, in consequence, those more or less of the French stage. English-speaking actors, on the other hand, who make a success of film work, can play either in England or the U.S.A., so that Hollywood effectively establishes the scale of their remuneration; the English producer has to hire his castes in direct competition with his wealthier American rivals. In addition, British films have been handicapped by slow studio production and tardy subsequent releases, involving the unproductive locking-up of capital, while distribution charges are often unwarrantably high.

Economically, therefore, the problem boils down to this: unless British film production is given by statute a virtual monopoly of the domestic market, it can survive only if it either is subsidised by the State or captures an adequate share of the American market.

Anything approaching total exclusion of American films from Britain would lead to an immediate consumers' strike on the part of audiences. With few exceptions the best feature films produced in this country during the past ten years are below the best American standard. The British industry has been handicapped by other things than mere lack of M.G.M.'s and Paramount's large financial resources. Save for Mr. Korda, of whom one can fairly say that he is supreme in a kingdom of the blind, British film production has thrown up no entrepreneur or director of outstanding talent—nobody comparable with René Clair or even the reasonably intelligent and civilised Mr. Capra. A great deal of propaganda, some of it not wholly disinterested, has been directed against the idea of an American invasion of British films. (Note, in passing, that if Gaumont-British had passed under the control of an American group, the G.B. "circuit" would have enabled the Americans to, starve, or squeeze for high prices, any other British theatre "circuit.") But if we are honest and rid our minds of prejudice against the (cinematographically very effective) idioms of American speech, can we really point to any American feature film shown here during the last ten years which has debased the taste of the average cinema audience to a greater extent than the average British popular newspaper and magazine? And how many British-made films can be said to have enhanced our "national culture" or even improved the prospects of our export trades? Much bunkum has been talked on this subject. The truth is that "the films," regarded as an art, have had to cater for the mass mind at the expense of aesthetic and mental standards; but the level of cultural quality in Elstree is remarkably similar to that in Hollywood.

Except for the (numerically unimportant) question of employment of personnel, the complete discontinuance of feature film production in this country would not be a major tragedy. But this is not the inevitable upshot of the present situation. There are two alternative ways out of existing difficulties. Conceivably the Board of Trade or some other appropriate bargaining agency may be able to negotiate successfully with the United States for a British film quota in that country. It will be difficult to secure bookings for British films from American exhibitors unless and until a much more regular supply of first-class feature films, whose marketing should be in the hands of a single "renting" agency, can be guaranteed. Isolated swallows like *Henry VIII* do not make a film summer. But possibilities along these lines are well worth exploring. Alternatively, the fact may have to be faced that the best solution is the absorption of British producing enterprises by the strong American combines.

Would much be lost? The United States film companies have too keen a flair for marketing not to be aware that their important revenue from British audiences would soon be jeopardised if they fed them with films of an excessively pro-American propagandist flavour or with subjects based exclusively on topics and manners of purely local interest. Not only so: film stories with British settings or drawn from English literature are highly popular with American audiences. Given amalgamation of financial interests, there is little doubt that a number of American feature films would be made in this country. If the establishment of an admittedly "internationalised" Anglo-American film industry meant the loss to British cinema-goers of several British directors of genius, "national" sentiments with regard to films might have some justification. Since, however, this is not the case, it is difficult to see the logical basis (save, perhaps, in the case of news-reels and educational films) for fighting to maintain British financial control of the producing side of the industry. And even in the case of news-reels and similar comments on *actualités*, has progressive thought in this country more to fear from, say, the directors of the *March of Time* than from the 100 per cent. home-made commentaries' adulation of royalty, military display and the tuppence-coloured trappings of a capitalist world?

AYLMER VALLANCE

LEGS

"THE man who doesn't use his legs is on his way to Harley Street," said Sir George Tilly, speaking at a lunch given to celebrate the production of a new film, *The Health of the Nation*. "Modern city life," he assured his fellow-lunchers, "with all its contrivances for making legs superfluous, is the enemy of fitness." And, having applauded these excellent sentiments, the guests, I feel perfectly sure, departed to their homes or offices in a long stream of taxis and private cars. I should be surprised to hear that even two per cent. of them

covered so much as a mile by leg as a result of Sir George's warnings.

Walking is natural, but the love of walking is an acquired taste. What inventions man has sought out from the earliest times in order to avoid the need of ambulation! He tamed the horse, the ass, the camel and the elephant as his carriers. He constructed vehicles of all shapes and sizes and attached them to horses in order that he might be able to go from place to place in a sitting position and save his legs from exertion. He rejoiced when the age of steam enabled a larger and larger number of people to make long journeys seated. Then came the electric tram, the electric train, the motor bus, and the motor car till we have now reached a point at which millions of human beings go sedentarily to their day's work in the morning and return sedentarily to their homes in the evening.

How seldom we envy anybody who is walking! What objects of envy, on the other hand, are and have always been those who are sitting in a moving vehicle! Sir Joshua Reynolds realised this when he advertised himself by going about in a carriage and pair. I confess that in my childhood I envied even the man who drove the baker's cart. I envied people in farm-carts as well as those in croydons, polo-carts, gigs, phaetons, school-carts, victorias and hansoms; and there seemed to be no bliss to compare with sitting on a side-car or a long-car on a country road. Sitting has by now become a habit with me, like smoking, so that I no longer get much positive pleasure from riding in taxis or even in the most luxurious motor cars. Still, I suppose I much prefer it to walking, for I seldom walk.

I do not defend the general antipathy to walking. I mention it as a significant fact, not as something to be commended. I agree with every word that Sir George Tilly says as to the virtue of walking; but it is one thing to recognise virtue and another thing to practise it. Doctors recommend walking as a form of exercise, and we so far agree with them as to have adopted the word "constitutional" as a synonym for a walk.

At the same time, we need to be ill or morbid before we can acquire the habit of taking a constitutional. To take a walk as if it were a pill is an insult to the face of Nature. I can conceive few things more indecent than the behaviour of those people who take a walk in order to get an appetite for the Sunday dinner or who go out later in order to walk the effects of the dinner off. Is it for this the trees are coming into leaf and the birds have flown from Africa—to see a valetudinarian carrying an incompetent stomach about in the sunshine on a reluctant pair of legs? After all, it was the capacity to walk upright that set man—until fairly recently—above the beasts of the field. So noble a capacity ought not to be degraded to the level of a medicine-bottle. Walking should be done for walking's sake or not at all. All the exercise that is needed for health can be got in the bedroom from a patent rowing-machine.

Even so, I cannot see eye to eye with those great walkers for walking's sake, William Hazlitt and Robert Louis Stevenson. To be so wrapped up in one's walking as to be unable to endure company on a walk is not my notion of happiness. I can appreciate the pleasure of being alone for a mile or an hour or even an afternoon, but to go striding along mile after mile, hour after hour, day after day, in solitude, without anyone at one's side even to speculate as to "what time they open" in the next village, is a height either of asceticism or of hedonism to which I could never rise. "I laugh, I run, I leap, I sing for joy," says Hazlitt of his moods as a solitary walker. This is a rough expression of moods of which I myself am much more conscious when sitting in a charabanc than when tramping alone along a road. Even Hazlitt, however, admitted that there was one exception to the rule that company spoils a walk. "I grant," he wrote, "there is one subject on which it is pleasant to talk on a journey, and that is, what we shall have for supper when we get to our inn at night." A gloomy subject, many who are acquainted with the food in English inns may think, but one welcomes any sign of wavering in so rigid a pedestrian.

As for Stevenson, he is even less human in his use of the legs than Hazlitt. He objects not only to company on a walk, but to those who take to walking as a means of seeing the country. "There are," he declares blandly, "many ways of seeing landscape quite as good. . . . Landscape on a walking tour is quite accessory. He who is of the brotherhood does not voyage in quest of the picturesque, but of certain jolly humours—of the hope and spirit in which the march begins at morning and the peace and spiritual repletion of the evening's rest."

It seems to me that, if the walker regards his legs as more important than his eyes as ministers to his happiness, he might as well do his walking on a cinder-track. In these days, indeed, there is much to be said for a cinder-track as an exercise-ground for the pedestrian. Here there are no motor cars to punctuate his thoughts in the wrong places—no uncommon birds or flowers to bring him again and again to a standstill or to distract him from the spiritual joys of concentrated legwork.

It may be that I misunderstand the spirit of the true walker, and that my conception of a walk scarcely rises above a stroll. And the pleasure I get even from a stroll lies not in the strolling, but in things seen and heard by the way. I am much more likely to take a stroll in order to see whether the willow-wrens have arrived than for the purpose of filling my lungs with the wind on the heath. I should take a stroll to see the cherry-trees in bloom in Buckinghamshire on days on which I should not walk a yard for pleasure in London. I am a born stroller in fact, always willing to walk a mile, or even two, to see anything that interests me, from the Atlantic Ocean to a gold-crest, from a cathedral to a chaffinch's nest. My chief complaint against London is that so much of it is not worth strolling in. If Sir George Tilly wishes town-dwellers to make more use of their legs, he should inaugurate a movement for making towns and cities more tempting to the eye. Make all London as beautiful as Church Row in Hampstead, and you will find hundreds of thousands of people who now use buses and trams walking to their shops and offices. Or, at least, you ought to.

The motorist, of course, has made the country an impossible place for walking, except where there are field-paths or downs. The only safe way to see the country at present is from a sitting position in a car, and till we have a more auspicious state of affairs, it is difficult to believe that the mass of people will become leg-conscious. "The man who does not use his legs," says Sir George Tilly, "is on his way to Harley Street"; but the man who does use his legs, as everybody else knows, is quite as likely to be on his way to hospital. That is the dilemma of the modern man. If Hazlitt or Stevenson had been writing to-day, I cannot help thinking that a certain note of bitterness would have crept into those famous pieces of prose, "On Going a Journey" and "Walking Tours." Mr. Belloc himself, noblest of contemporary pedestrians, won his spurs as a walker, if the image is admissible, before petrol had conquered the world.

If, however, preferring a hospital to Harley Street, you must indulge in walking, be sure at least to keep in mind the advice of Hippocrates on the matter. "Walking," writes that great doctor, "should be rapid in winter and slow in summer, unless it be under a burning heat. Fleshy people should walk faster, thin people slower. . . . Fat people who wish to become thin should always fast when they undertake exertion, and take their food while they are panting and before they have cooled, drinking beforehand diluted wine that is not very cold." If these instructions are strictly followed, even the fattest man ought to be able to use his legs to the advantage of his health unless he is knocked down by a motor car while doing so. And, if he is knocked down by a motor car, he will at least have the consolation of knowing that he fell honourably in a heroic campaign—a campaign to rescue the human leg from atrophy.

HEIL GÖTTINGEN!

[Acknowledgments to George Canning whose poem, on which this is modelled, *The University of Göttingen*, was published more than a century ago.]

Durham, of which Lord Londonderry is Chancellor . . . is . . . the only British University to accept the invitation . . . to the Göttingen bicentenary celebrations in June.—*News Chronicle*, April 28th.

Now the Third Reich has purged anew
these halls our foes were plotting in,
the learned world is bidden to
our *Kulturfestspiel* at the U-
-niversity of Göttingen.

While democrat and ape-like Jew
our penal camps are rotting in,
the Chairs of Totem and Tabu
take place of honour at the U-
-niversity of Göttingen.

Our plant of Nordic culture true
this nursery we are potting in,
unique for its ensanguined hue,
which smells to heaven at the U-
-niversity of Göttingen.

Intoxicating Brocken-brew
this cauldron we are hotting in,
to rise to Nazi brains like glue
and stick our dogma to the U-
-niversity of Göttingen.

Ach! Groves of learning, fair to view,
with no non-Aryan squatting in,
where racial fetish reigns in lieu
of arts and science at the U-
-niversity of Göttingen-
-niversity of Göttingen! SAGITTARIUS

Correspondence

THE BUDGET

SIR,—I was shocked to find that the equilibrium of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION was as upset by Neville Chamberlain's suggested National Defence Contribution as was the Stock Exchange itself.

Apart from the fact that much of the argument you put forward in the article, "Budget Chaos," can be applied with equal force in arguing against income-tax, or for that matter against any taxes at all, you appear to ignore certain arguments in favour of some such tax as the National Defence Contribution.

This tax introduces the important principle of limiting profits. By taxing on a graduated scale rises in profits above any given period, the way is opened for much more drastic limitation of profits than the Chancellor now proposes. Theoretically, the possibilities are limited only by a 100 per cent. on increased profits. Because N.D.C. is a tax on profits of companies *qua* companies and not on individual shareholders, this limitation is effective. Previously income-tax alone was payable by companies, but this is paid by the individual shareholder to the extent that income is distributed. Companies pay no surtax, so the tax on company profits was limited to the extent to which income-tax was applied to the individual. Taxes on company profits could not, therefore, be increased without increasing the individual taxpayers' burden as well, which might not be desired.

A difference between the rentier (defined by implication by you as being the holder of fixed interest debentures) and the *entrepreneur* (the holder of equity shares) is that the profits of the latter are unlimited. The debenture holder's income is subject to income and surtax, and is so limited; but the higher these taxes are, all that needs to be done to enable the equity holder to retain the same net income is for higher dividends to be paid, that is, for industrial profits to be increased. The *entrepreneur* may shoulder the maximum risk of enterprise but he also pockets maximum profits, limited only by economic circumstances, and not by governmental regulation.

To argue that N.D.C. would encourage extravagance is as logical as arguing that it will lead to higher wages. The argument might apply if a very large proportion of the increased profits went in taxes, but the maximum proposed as yet is only one-third—the other two-thirds remain for distribution. Are company directors so pigheaded that to avoid paying one pound to the Government they will deprive shareholders of two?

N.D.C. has its anomalies, its inequities and its disadvantages, but any tax that opens the way for taxing the profits of industry at their source, and thereby limiting dividends paid to the equity shareholder, should be as welcome to those opposed to capitalism as it is unwelcome to the Stock Exchange and investor, as reflected in the collapse in share prices.

35 Ormonde Gate, ERNEST DAVIES
Chelsea, S.W.3.

[The N.D.C. was no doubt intended to have the effect on Labour that it has had on Mr. Davies. Unfortunately it does not establish any equitable principle of limiting profits; it merely provides for a tax on *some* profits, while many of the worst "profiteers" are unscathed. Since a National Government will not give us a Socialist budget, it is surely legitimate to criticise the Government's tax proposals in relation to the framework in which they are conceived. Must Socialists necessarily support any plan calculated to make the present economic system work badly?—ED., *N.S. & N.*]

"SI VIS PACEM"

SIR,—Mr. Eric B. Smith evidently attaches an esoteric meaning to the term "progressive." Otherwise he would not make the extraordinary assertion that "the progressive forces of this country" had ever been "solidly ranged" on the side of unqualified disarmament in the face of aggression. There have, of course, always been non-resisters among progressives; but there certainly never was the unanimity he suggests. The fact that progessives support the League of Nations proves this. For the whole point of the League is the organisation of sanctions against an aggressor. Take this away, and Geneva becomes a mere debating society. Hence the present zeal of the Right for the elimination of sanctions.

It is no doubt possible to be a progressive and to advocate the disarmament of democracy in the face of Fascism. But the progressive who takes that line should be clear as to its implications. It implies that it does not matter to progressives whether Spanish or any other democracy lives or dies. It implies the abandonment of all hope of a world order. If we hope for a world order, it is impossible to fold our arms when Fascism, as in Spain to-day, clashes with internationalism.

Mr. Smith should be aware that the "non-intervention" against which Left-wing opinion protests is in reality a hypocritical form of intervention on behalf of Franco. Genuine non-intervention, i.e., abstinence from military aid to either side, with recognition of the legal right of the Spanish Government to supply itself with arms in the open market, would have had much to be said for it. For democratic countries to stop supplies to the Spanish Government and to threaten volunteers with pains and penalties, while Fascist countries send whole divisions to Franco, may please Mr. Smith, but it does not please the rest of us.

In view of the fact that Right opinion is almost solidly pro-Franco, Mr. Smith's suggestion that progressives who oppose "non-intervention" are "being hoodwinked by the Right," and "in danger of becoming the apostles of a newer-Blimpism," is rather remote from reality. His recommendation that we should examine our premises is sound. How sound it is, his own letter is sufficient proof. ARCHIBALD ROBERTSON

13 Laurel Road,
Wimbledon, S.W.20.

SIR,—Mr. Eric Smith invites us to examine our premises. May I state mine, in the hope that others of the Left Wing will agree with me?

I agree with Mr. Eden to this extent, that to make war on Fascism is to substitute Beelzebub for Satan, and to make war on Bolshevism is even worse. I believe the whole object of our foreign policy should be devoted not to the making of war on this or that political creed, but to the prevention of war everywhere. For this purpose we need enough armed force to deter and check an aggressor, and enough imagination to remedy real grievances.

Now to apply these premises to Spain. If the war going on to-day were a mere civil war between Spaniards, I should be enthusiastically in favour of non-intervention and mediation if possible. But to-day what is happening, in fact if not in law, is an unprovoked attack on one State by a combination of two other States with the help of a few discontented conservatives. In these circumstances I do not ask for "the sort of war I like," but for the checking of the aggressors with all the means in our power, as I asked in the cases of Abyssinia and China. This attitude I regard as perfectly consistent with my attitude before Spain, and not in the least Blimp-like. B. V. C.

NATIVE LANDS IN KENYA

SIR,—Mr. Kenyatta told your readers last week another case of injustice done to the people of Tigoni in respect of their transfer to another place and the alienation of their land. Last week, before the letter appeared, I questioned the Colonial Secretary on the matter. I asked how it came about that the particular headman who agreed to the transfer was appointed and whether before the appointment there was any agreement about the removal. Mr. Ormsby-Gore said that the suggestion that the headman had been bribed was absurd; no guarantee of any kind was sought or given; the appointment was regular and in accordance with the relevant Ordinances. The Colonial Secretary undertook to inquire whether the headman had authority to agree to the alienation of the private owned lands of other natives. In reply to a further question he contended that the removal was an exchange carried out on the recommendation of the Morris Carter Land Commission, who believed that the transfer would be to the advantage of the natives concerned. The native objection was to any move at all, although previously the decision had been discussed with and explained to the people on more than one occasion, and the late Governor had reported that there was not now any serious opposition to the proposed move. I fear it is unlikely that the situation can be suitably remedied even if Mr. Ormsby-Gore pursues his promised inquiries. It is obvious that if our trusteeship of the Africans is to become a reality more than vigilance is required in this country. The explanations offered in the House speak for themselves. A. CREECH JONES

House of Commons.

THE LEFT BOOK CLUB

SIR,—I am surprised that there has not been more support for Mr. Allen Skinner's plea for a Socialist Book Club, run by a representative committee of selectors in conjunction with all or any publishing houses willing to co-operate in the scheme. Now that Mr. Gollancz has proved—what some of us had for a long time believed—that a very large "Left" book-buying public really exists, there would appear to be every reason for meeting the demands of that public on as wide a scale as possible; and no reason at all why the question should be debated as though it involved an infringement of anybody's monopoly.

After all, Messrs. Horder and Strachey are both on a level as regards "disinterestedness" in this matter. What Socialists who realise the importance of this method of working-class and democratic political education must see to is surely that Mr. Gollancz's courageous pioneer work in this particular field should be extended and developed in every possible way.

5 Gardnor Mansions, J. F. HORRABIN
Church Row, Hampstead, N.W.3.

SIR,—I am unmasked. But Mr. Strachey's revelation about my professional interest in one of the books I mentioned should not be allowed to eclipse my point. I was trying to bear out with a concrete instance Mr. Skinner's contention that people who tie themselves to receiving the books of one publisher may not always be getting the best available on a particular subject—even when that publisher is Gollancz with his known flair. My remarks on *Spain in Revolt* are supported by press opinions at the time, and personally by several members of the Left Book Club itself.

And am I quite alone in feeling that anyone who joins a Book Club (Left, Right or Straight-Ahead) which insists on regular purchases is foolish to deprive himself thus of his valuable right of individual choice? The less he can afford to spend, the more foolish he is. 42,000 people seem to have forgotten that the ordinary channels of book distribution have still several positive advantages for those prepared to take a little trouble.

So when Mr. Parker wants six fundamental books on sociology, let him look in the *Daily Worker*, *Reynolds*, the *New Statesman and Nation* or whatever he reads and consider the book reviews (and even the advertisements) that diligent hacks prepare for his instruction. He will there find all Left books of note given their due, and will be able to judge for himself (surely he is not afraid to do this?) which are worth attention. He can *read* ad lib. by badgering, with the help of his friends, that too "conservative" public librarian—in itself a useful job of work; and when he comes to *buy*, he will still find Gollancz's best sociological works cheaply available, since no competent publishing firm in these days fails to provide such an edition where it is likely to be called for. But he will never be compelled to buy what may happen to be second-best. In short, he will be free.

I seem to be a minority of one, a shamelessly vested interest, a butting ram, uncharitable, spiteful and disingenuous. Even so, I should be surprised if there isn't something in what I say.

32 Great Ormond Street. T. M. HORDER
London, W.C.1.

SIR,—Why all this fuss about the Left Book Club? The warning that a book has commended itself to Comrades Gollancz, Laski and Strachey is one for which I shall always feel grateful.

New University Club, IVOR THOMAS
St. James's Street, S.W.1.

ANGELICA

SIR,—In reviewing the Stage Society's performance of *Angelica* I said that it might possibly occur to a spectator that in caricaturing the attitude of academic and learned persons to the rule of the Regent, Leo Ferrero had his distinguished father in his mind.

It is true that the notion did occur to me in the theatre, but it was gratuitous and unsupported by a scrap of outside evidence. It was therefore not worth mentioning, and certainly ought not to have been mentioned, seeing that it was also capable of giving pain. I am most anxious to admit this. DESMOND MACCARTHY

25 Wellington Square,
S.W.3.

[Since receiving Mr. MacCarthy's letter we have received a letter from Professor Ferrero who writes from Geneva to say that the report that he has "come to terms with the Duce is fantastic." He continues:

> Since 1930 I am living in Geneva, and here I shall die and will be buried in the Plainpalais' cemetery next to my beloved son, if fate will not let me see the end of that horrible regime which ruins and torments Italy. It is not for me, as it was not for Leo, a struggle for political interest, but a question of moral principles.—ED. *N.S. & N.*]

CORNFORD-MACLAURIN FUND

SIR,—I would like once more to ask for the hospitality of your columns in order to bring before your readers new facts connected with this Fund.

Of these by far the most important is that still another Cambridge man has been killed fighting in Spain in the ranks of the International Brigade. Gerald Lorimer Birch came up to Caius College in 1932 and ended a normal undergraduate period by taking an honours degree in science, specialising particularly in chemistry. In January, 1936, he obtained a well-paid position with excellent prospects as research chemist for a large concern. During his time as a student he was a calm, quiet, friendly, cheerful person, a valued member of the College chess club, but interested also in athletics, and capable enough at canoeing to achieve the distinction of crossing the English Channel by this means. His political activities as a student were very limited, but a friend writes that "his clear appreciation of the meaning of everyday events brought him into sympathy with Communism, and he joined the Communist Party shortly after leaving Cambridge." In the early part of last year he took an active part in the struggle against Fascism in London, and was arrested during the notorious police charge at Thurloe Square in February. In September, much affected by events in Spain, he left quietly to fight there for the people's cause, without letting it be generally known, and no doubt feeling that his knowledge of the Spanish language would be a valuable asset. He was killed on Christmas Day, 1936, when the British group attached to the Thaelmann battalion of the International Brigade held up an attack by Moors and Legionaries for many hours until the Government command could bring up reinforcements.

The Fund Committee believe that many of your readers will wish to associate their urgently needed gifts to the Spanish people's

cause with the name of Lorimer Birch, who, like Cornford and Maclaurin, gave up a career of promise, and life itself, for the ideals of democratic freedom which we all profess and the fight for a better social order. The Fund, since its inception in February last, has reached the total of £1,120, and the goal of £2,000 still stands before us. Contributions, if not left free for disposal at the Committee's discretion, should be earmarked for Medical Aid, the Youth Foodship Organisation, the International Brigade, the Brigade Dependents, or the Dean of Canterbury's Foodship Fund.

JOSEPH NEEDHAM, Hon. Treasurer,
Caius College, Cambridge. Cornford-Maclaurin Fund

MR. BIRRELL'S MEMORY

SIR,—George Augustus Sala in his little volume *Charles Dickens* (1870) alludes on page vi to an occasion when "last year" (1869?) Liverpool feasted the great novelist in St. George's Hall. Mr. J. L. Hammond, in his interesting review of *Things Past Redress*, falls into error, therefore, in suggesting that Dickens did not take part in any public ceremony in Liverpool during the period of Augustine Birrell's boyhood.

The point is not of much importance save that, as a Liverpool man, I am anxious that it should not appear that my native city failed to honour "the Good Genie of Fiction" when opportunity offered.

Mr. Hammond is surprised at Birrell's lapse of memory. I am surprised that Birrell should have embroidered his dream with such an abundance of circumstantial detail, and still more amazed that an absurdly trifling episode should have "lived in his memory as the greatest spontaneous tribute to genius he had ever seen."

Why this laughter and thinly veiled derision at the surname of "Weller"? There is a Weller Street in Liverpool (a few yards from my own birthplace), but it dates, I think, a year or two later than the civic honouring of Dickens. The London Telephone Directory provides us with more than an entire column of Wellers, including yet another "Miss Weller" and at least one "Samuel."

Am I deficient in the sense of humour when I fail to see the point Birrell so industriously elaborates with some 500 words of pure fake?

W. RALPH HALL CAINE
Ken Wood Farm House, N.W.3.

CORPORAL PUNISHMENT

SIR,—The question of corporal punishment will shortly be examined by a Departmental Committee appointed by the Home Secretary. Valuable evidence will doubtless be submitted by magistrates, police and officials of high standing. The Howard League for Penal Reform will, of course, offer evidence; and that evidence, while not ignoring the humanitarian case and the psychological problem involved, will, in the main, be factual, dealing with the practical results of corporal punishment in the prevention of crime.

It is not possible for most private citizens to put their views before Departmental Committees, and one function of the Howard League is to provide a channel for the transmission of such valuable information as may be in the possession of numbers of ordinary citizens. We should like our evidence to be as representative as possible, and we should therefore welcome any information from those who possess it to supplement what we shall obtain from our own researches and from our own membership, and we shall be most grateful to you if, by publishing this letter, you would give us an opportunity of appealing to your readers for their co-operation.

We shall be glad to receive information in as brief a form as possible from those who have either first- or second-hand knowledge of facts:

(1) the conditions under which, and the methods by which, birchings ordered by the juvenile court have been carried out, giving the date, place, number of police or other persons present; whether the child was stripped and how he was held during the punishment; and whether any medical examination was given before, during or after the punishment.

(2) What period of time elapsed between the making of the order for whipping and the actual infliction of the punishment.

(3) The effects upon the offender, physical or psychological, of corporal punishment inflicted following an order of the juvenile court or a sentence passed by an adult court. If, in any case, it is possible to quote medical testimony under this heading the information will be of additional value.

(4) The after-history of any offenders who were either birched by order of the court as children, or birched or flogged under sentence of Courts of Assize or Quarter Sessions, with particular reference to the question whether or no they repeated the offence for which they were whipped, or were subsequently convicted of another offence, floggable or non-floggable.

We should be very grateful if anyone who has any information to send would send it to us in writing, addressed to the Hon. Sec., Howard League for Penal Reform, Parliament Mansions, Victoria Street, London, S.W.1.

We shall, of course, treat any information so received in strict confidence and use only the facts without any publication of details whereby the cases could be identified.

Howard League for Penal Reform CICELY M. CRAVEN,
Hon. Secretary
GEORGE BENSON,
Chairman

NAZIS IN HUNGARY

SIR,—It seems, to a regular and usually admiring reader like myself, a pity you printed this week under the heading "Nazis in Hungary" a letter signed "Theodore Kilan." Surely the idea of the Regent of Hungary conspiring with some young Nazis in the back room of a travelling agency to overthrow the Government he himself called into being only six months ago is so inherently improbable as to require more than the authority of a casual correspondent who seems to be quite unknown in Budapest. It is as if a serious and helpful publication such as the "Hungarian Quarterly" were to print a letter from some unknown Londoner disclosing that the present King had been conspiring with Sir Oswald Mosley and his now shirtless young men in some secluded tobacco shop for the overthrow of the British Government. How little Mr. Kilan can be qualified to inform your readers about Hungary and how ignorant he is of what is going on in Budapest is self-evident in his letter. Mr. Kilan says: "No one was arrested, no one lost his position, and no one was punished." Before Mr. Kilan's letter was published London newspapers had reported the arrest of twenty-five Hungarian Nazis and the dissolution of the Nazi Party. On April 24th the *Times* announced that Major Szalasy, leader of the Party, had been sentenced to three months' imprisonment and three years' loss of civil rights. Mr. Kilan's other astonishing statements, including the indefinite postponement of the universal secret ballot, are as inaccurate as his declaration that "no one was punished." Lest some of your readers may reasonably ask why a little-known Londoner should presume to correct Mr. Kilan of Budapest, perhaps you will allow me to explain that I have been unofficially advising the Hungarian Government for over fourteen years.

WILLIAM GOODE
49 Westbourne Gardens,
W.2.

STAG-HUNTING

SIR,—Cockfighting is in the news. It is reported on good authority that "mains" are still held in the Yorkshire dales in spite of the fact that cockfighting was prohibited by law over one hundred years ago. The R.S.P.C.A. offers a reward of £500 for information leading to a conviction, and aeroplanes are used to scour the countryside in search of offenders.

One does not need an aeroplane, however, to discover other "sports" which are even more cruel than cockfighting, but against which no legislation exists. For example, one has but to go a-walking in the otherwise peaceful valleys of Devon and Somerset to witness the hunting of wild deer. One may see, as I did a few days ago, a stag which has been hunted for twenty miles or more across country, brought to bay in some rocky stream, exhausted, terrified, dragged down by a pack of yelping, biting hounds, shot at with sporting guns, and then, after half an hour's agony, dragged from the water and brutally done to death with a knife. One may see the huntsman cut out its steaming entrails and throw them to the hounds—a disgusting ritual. One may see a stag hounded over a precipice to crash to death on the rocks below. One may even see a stag chased out to sea by those who call themselves "sportsmen." In these and other similarly barbaric ways 207 of the wild deer of Exmoor were "accounted for" during the 1935–36 staghunting season by the three packs which hunt in the West Country.

Because it takes place in little-frequented parts of the country this cruel "sport" of staghunting does not come to the notice of the general public. If the public knew the true facts the outcry would be so great that it would soon be abolished by law.

The Protection of Animals (No. 2) Bill to prohibit the hunting of wild deer was introduced to Parliament on March 5th, 1930, and passed its first reading without a division. A Labour Government was then in power. On several subsequent occasions the Prime Minister has been asked to grant time for the discussion of the Bill and the reply has always been in the negative, "in view of the great pressure of business."

A poor man who works a horse in an unfit condition soon finds himself in trouble, even though he may be dependent on it for his living. A man who allows his dog to worry deer in a Royal park, or sheep, is liable to prosecution. But a gang of pleasure-seeking men and women can hound a terrified deer to an agonising death without fear of punishment.

Kensington, W.8. J. DENIS BURTON

DUST COLLECTING

SIR,—I am impelled to write to you on a matter which has for years been an increasing irritation and perplexity in my mind, viz., the method of collecting dust and rubbish in London—possibly not all parts, but in all too many. As I stood at a window this lovely spring morning watching the bright sunshine light up flowers and trees, and with a renewed feeling of hopefulness that somehow comes at such moments, there drew up before my house the Woolwich Borough Council dust-cart, a huge, horse-drawn, open-sided monstrosity attended by four or five foully clad (and necessarily so) men, who entered various gates, reappeared carrying objects marked "Sanitary Dustbin" (why?), with the lids removed, and in the sharp breeze these men proceeded to empty the contents of the bins through the open sides of the cart—needless to say, the dust, bits of paper, etc., blew back in their faces and whirled about in the street. One man poked the collected rubbish about with a shovel to settle it a bit and make more room, as by the time the cart reaches this street the level of the rubbish is always well above the openings at the sides of the cart. Then the dustbins were returned to their homes and the cart and its attendants resumed their leisurely and dirt-spreading way; at the same time butcher-boys, bakers, greengrocers and, yes, milkmen were delivering their goods, mainly unwrapped, at the houses round, in fact, I watched with a sort of petrified horror the butcher's boy pass through the cloud of dust just then raised by the stirring of the cauldron, and enter the next-door house with a barely covered slab of meat in his hand.

After the car had passed in its funereal way (it takes hours to go up this road), I still stood at the window and a vision arose before my eyes of a Swiss town where I lived for a time in the years before the war. I remembered the strong impression made on me in my teens by the astonishing cleanliness (to an English mind) of the town. The rapid closed dust collector, which only very early risers even saw, and the strict regulations against any dust-removal, street-sweeping or even so much as shaking a mat or duster into the street after 8 a.m. Then I also thought of a few English towns where rubbish is collected to-day and has been for years in fast closed motor vans, opening only enough for a dustbin's contents to be shot in, by the pressure of the dustman's foot on a pedal. Although I have ceased in my half-century of life to be amazed at the way things are done in this country, I stood and wondered whether I should live to see the day when the largest and richest city in the world would begin to consider hygienic arrangements for its most elementary needs.

198 Avery Hill Road, GRACE HYDE
New Eltham, S.E.9.

Miscellany

HEROES IN SPAIN

G——, a driver in the convoy of the Unit to which I managed to attach myself from Barcelona to Valencia, was formerly a 'cellist in a Corner House orchestra. Fat, frank, spectacled and intelligent, he had learned to drive a lorry on the day of his arrival in Barcelona: he drove with too much concentration, leaning over the wheel to fix his attention short-sightedly on the road. In a moment of emotion, when we were driving along the moonlit coastal road between Tarragona and Tortosa, he told me that he had only wept three times in his life: once, at the Wembley Tattoo when the whole crowd was hysterical with imperialist fervour, and looking round he had a sudden vision of what it all meant and was leading to; once, when after playing musical trash for months in the restaurant, he went to Sadler's Wells, and hearing *Figaro* performed, realised what music might be and what the standards were by which he earned his living; once, that very morning in Barcelona, when he realised, as he put it, that "the people in this town know they are free."

All the time I was in Spain I remembered these three occasions on which G—— had wept; they seem to me a monument of personal honesty, of the spirit in which the best men have joined the International Brigade. I believe that at certain moments in history a few people—usually unknown ones—are able to live not for themselves but for a principle. One man goes out to Spain because his dislike of the Corner House orchestra and his love of Mozart suddenly becomes a rule of action with which his own life is identified. A young girl, who happens to be an Anglo-Catholic, and who is politically ignorant, goes out to nurse the wounded because she wishes to alleviate human suffering. Her patients, as soon as they are convalescent, bully her for her lack of "ideology," and she suffers far more than they are able to imagine.

The unity which exists to-day in Governmental Spain is the unity of a people whose lives are identified with a principle. This unity is real, though it is something far more difficult to put one's finger on than the obvious differences of the political parties. Talk to people and they are best able to express their differences of opinion, and these differences soon produce various degrees of feeling. Read the editorials of the newspapers in Valencia and the differences which are labelled under such initials as U.G.T., F.A.I., C.N.T., P.O.U.M., soon appear very alarming indeed, especially when "unity" is being discussed. As one newspaper correspondent said: "The more they speak of unity, the more they seem to quarrel."

Yet the unity which was G——'s and my own first impression of Barcelona is a reality which is probably moulding Spanish democracy more quickly than those who deal in journalism and political controversy realise. The attitude of the Spanish people to members of the International Brigade is a good test of their fundamental agreement. In the first place, propaganda about the Brigade has perhaps not been handled as tactfully as it might have been. For example, the battle of Morata was a turning point in the war because the Spanish troops rallied instead of fleeing at a critical moment. When I went along the lines at Morata, in March, I found that the Spanish Lister battalion was entrenched in positions nearer the enemy lines than any trenches of the Brigade. Yet almost all the credit for Morata has gone to the Brigade. Again, quite apart from the decisive action of the Republican Air Force, which is now 90 per cent. Spanish, Spanish troops fought courageously at Guadalajara, yet all the glory went to the Italian Garibaldi battalion.

Tactless propaganda about the International Brigade might appear humiliating to the Spanish people, so it is sometimes suggested that the Brigade is rather resented in Spain. Yet during my six weeks of travelling in Spain I was almost invariably mistaken for a member of the Brigade and treated with extraordinary generosity on that account. Again, it is suggested that the Anarchists are afraid of what the Brigade may do after the war is won. But in practice, Anarchists and members of the Brigade work and fight side by side and the boundaries between political movements are broken down at the front.

I went to Barcelona, Valencia, Madrid, Morata, Alabacete and Tortosa (where the entire population had camped out on the hills at night for fear of an air raid); and I travelled a good deal between these places, going in trains, lorries and private cars. My first and last impressions were not the struggle for power amongst the heads of committees in the large towns, nor inefficiency and bureaucracy, common as they are during

a revolution which is also a war; but the courage of the people in Madrid, the enthusiasm of eighty per cent. of the people everywhere for the social revolution, the generosity of the workers wherever I met them, in the streets, in trains, in lorries; the marked difference between the awakening younger generation of Spanish workers and the stupefied older ones. Every observer who stays in Republican Spain comes back again and again to a realisation that it is the people of Spain who count.

At first the war strengthened and unified the social revolution, but in the long run war demands its own measures which threaten to engulf the whole social system. I set beside the story of G——, the lorry driver, the story of H——, a member of the International Brigade, who first came out as correspondent for one of the most reactionary English newspapers. H—— fought in the battle of Morata, where there were four hundred casualties in three days out of a battalion of six hundred men. The worst part of this battle was fought without trenches or other protection, except olive trees, in hilly country amongst the fields and olive groves. On the first day of the battle a friend of H—— died of a stomach wound, bleeding to death. H—— stayed by him, under fire, until he died. That night H—— disturbed his comrades, who were trying to sleep, by walking along the lines shouting out that he was thirsty and must have water. . . . The next morning he happened to be fighting next to a friend of mine in the olive grove. He said repeatedly to my friend: "You see that wall over there? How far do you think it is?" My friend answered, "One hundred yards." "Well, you take a range of 120 and I'll try one of 100," etc. . . . That evening he appeared in the lines holding a bundle of telegraph wires which he waved above his head. He said "Look, I've cut Franco's communications." He had gone mad.

I tell this story in order to counteract the propaganda about heroes in wars. The final horror of war is the complete isolation of a man dying alone in a world whose reality is violence. The dead in wars are not heroes: they are freezing or rotting lumps of isolated insanity.

People try to escape from a realisation of the violence to which abstract ideas and high ideals have led them by saying either that individuals do not matter or else that the dead are heroes. It may be true that at certain times the lives of individuals are unimportant in relation to the whole of future history—although the violent death of many individuals may modify the consciousness of a whole generation as much as a work of art or a philosophical treatise. But to say that those who happen to be killed are heroes is a wicked attempt to identify the dead with the abstract ideas which have brought them to the front, thus adding prestige to those ideas, which are used to lead the living on to similar "heroic" deaths.

Perhaps soldiers suspect this, for they do not like heroic propaganda. When I was at the Morata Front several men complained of the heroics in Left-wing papers. Some praised very highly the report of the battle of Morata, written by Philip Jordan, which appeared in the *News Chronicle*: but they complained that even that, restrained as it was, was too heroic. I had the impression that soldiers in a war have an almost pathetic longing to know the truth.

I returned from Spain feeling more strongly than I have ever felt before that I support the Spanish social revolution. Since the war must be won if the revolution is to be retained, there is nothing to do but accept it as a terrible necessity. Shortly before he died, the poet Garcia Lorca is reported to have said that he would write in time of war the poetry of those who hate war; and when the Indian writer Mulk Raj Anand asked the soldiers fighting in the trenches at Madrid what message they would send to the Indian peasants and workers, they answered: "Tell our Indian comrades that we hope that when the time comes, they will not have to fight for their freedom as we are doing." I like the Spanish people because it seems to me that they are emotionally honester than any other people. There are few heroics, no White Feathers, and genuine hatred for the necessity of the war, in Spain. A war such as the present one may be necessary: but it seems to me that the Left-wing movement in this country can never afford to forget how terrible war is; and that not the least of its crimes is the propaganda which turns men into heroes.

STEPHEN SPENDER

THE PROPHET OF IMPRESSIONISM?

"John Constable, his Origins and Influence," at Wildensteins.

THE object of this exhibition is to show the position of John Constable in the history of art. Though we know that Constable loved Claude and Ruysdael and Rubens, and respected Gainsborough, the question of who influenced whom among contemporaries is necessarily a little vague at 100 years range. Constable was born in 1776, during the vogue of nature-loving—six years after Wordsworth—and while he was gaily naming his lodging in Charlotte Street "Ruysdael House," in Paris there was flourishing, quite independently, a certain Georges Muller, called "the Ruysdael of Montmartre." It was a moment when, as Constable remarked, there was room for a natural painter. The Industrial Revolution was giving nature a new prestige, and the early nineteenth century artists could no more avoid her than the contemporary Spanish artists can avoid militiamen. But how much Constable's own influence counted for is altogether a different matter. If Muller was affected he was affected only in the most superficial way, while Corot and Courbet are almost as far removed from the sweet damp mood of Constable as it was possible to be. For those who want to prove Constable influential, the case of Delacroix, with his huge enthusiasm for *The Haywain*, seems conclusive. But even this has a rather doubtful validity. We cannot know now how much Delacroix was impressed by Constable's vision, how much simply by his bold handling. The enthusiasm of 1824 may well have been a passing phase. We are told that

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The net new Life Sums assured amounted to £16,897,582.

The Total net new Sums assured inclusive of Sinking Fund amounted to £18,252,837.

The net new Life Premium Income was £1,170,687.

The net Fire and Accident Premium Income was £535,522.

Total Life business in force at the end of 1936, 171,337 policies assuring £118,214,087 and Deferred Annuities of £2,659,399 per annum.

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Delacroix repainted *The Massacre of Scio* after seeing *The Haywain*, but unfortunately we cannot now know what the former looked like before repainting, or indeed—since it was again repainted in 1848—what it looked like in the Salon. And while the little water colour landscape in this exhibition shows some of the Englishman's influence, the ravishing exotical *Lion with a Grass Snake* seems to belong to an entirely different world. Diaz, Daubigny and Rousseau are less confidently claimed as followers, and it is lucky that the connection is not strong for their dismal productions dankly infect anything that comes near them. Moreover, Turner was the artist who bowled over the budding Impressionists that came to London. There may be evidence that they looked also at Constable. But it must be remembered that the best Constables did not come into the public galleries until after 1886. Impressionism had begun about 1865, and even then there is some time to wait before there rose another "natural" painter who wanted to celebrate his individual vision, to recapture his little sensation. And when we come to Cézanne in this exhibition it seems we have come too far. This late version of the Mont Ste. Victoire is a superb picture, hard, brilliant and muscular. With the Rubens landscape that hangs nearly beside it it is the joint star of the show. Cézanne is the successor of Rubens rather than of Constable.

The exhibition catalogue provides a series of comments on the organisers' reasons for selecting the pictures they have. Such a statement as "the pressure of political events and of political theory (in the Napoleonic era) extinguished the vitality of the arts in France" is itself open to doubt—especially when one recalls that at the time David, Gros, Prudhon and Géricault were working in Paris. But this statement must be made and accepted if the organisers are to make their point that Constable was the force that restarted art. That the situation does not seem so simple is no criticism of Constable as an artist. He was the first of the great nineteenth-century semi-amateur artists. Like Manet he was an instinctive Tory and an instructive revolutionary. The chronological classification of his work in this exhibition is curiously revealing. Such pictures as *House and Garden at Hampstead* (1818) and *Malvern Hall* (1821) would appear to the uninformed as mere juvenilia, while the drawing (No. 153) of a horse and cart must be reassuring to any ambitious painter who draws badly. On the other hand, such sketches as *House by Lake* (1809), *Hilly Landscape* (1809), and *Wiltshire Valley* (1819), would seem to be by a master at the height of his power. This exhibition, which includes forty-four oil paintings and nearly ninety drawings, makes no pretence to be more than a complement to the more important array which will be opened at the Tate Gallery early next month. One comes away feeling that Constable was a very fine painter, but rather doubting the notion that he is the originator of all that we used to call "Modern Painting." Indeed, though Constable was a man of his time, and his time was moving towards Courbet and Manet and ultimately Cézanne and Degas, he appears to have had very little effect on the painters who followed him. He was, in fact, an omen rather than an influence. GRAHAM BELL

PLAYS AND PICTURES

"Festival Time," at the Embassy

Mr. Lionel Hale's *She Passed Through Lorraine* was one of the plays within recent years which had invention and a pleasantly unusual sense of humour. This humour has not deserted him, and though the play fizzles out towards the end and leaves one with an uncomfortably flat feeling, it has enough wit and observation to make one want it revised and given another start. Both Miss Sophie Stewart and Mr. Arthur Macrae give delightful performances, particularly Mr. Macrae, whose talent for getting his effect with the minimum of effort has never been better displayed. Another very good performance is that of Aunt Prudence by Miss Joan Hickson, while the rich possibilities of an impressario's life are ably sketched by Mr. C. Lascar. Salzburg has its weaknesses and they are all here, but its performances do not as a rule have ragged ends and that is the demerit of this piece.

"Don Pasquale," at Covent Garden

This delightful comic opera by Donizetti is revived successfully at Covent Garden under Francesco Salfi who, however, gave a slightly disappointing performance on the first night, as he allowed the orchestral playing to become noisy and a trifle crude occasionally. This will probably be remedied at future performances as it is due, no doubt, to the conditions under which so many operas have to be produced in so short a time during the Covent Garden season. A new coloratura soprano, Mme. Favero, made a very good impression and with the tenor, Dino Borgioli, gave a very satisfying performance, especially in the last act where there is some of the best music, including a truly magnificent chorus. When this opera was first performed it was given in contemporary costume (1843) but later it became the custom to put it back into the eighteenth century. It would be an improvement to produce it in the period in which it was written. In any case, Covent Garden is a trifle too large a theatre for such an opera as *Don Pasquale* to make its full effect.

"A Wedding Bouquet," at Sadler's Wells

The new ballet, *A Wedding Bouquet*, music and decor by Lord Berners, words by Gertrude Stein and choreography by Frederick Ashton, produced on Tuesday night at Sadler's Wells, was a great success with the audience, although it is no more than a pastiche and is not an important contribution to the art of ballet. It is fairly obvious that the Douanier Rousseau's famous painting suggested this ballet, but nothing could be less like Rousseau's own work. The virtue of Rousseau's art lies in its absolutely genuine naivety and this Berners-Stein-Ashton ballet is anything but naive. On the contrary, its effects are due to a special sort of impure foolery which is very consciously even if occasionally witlessly conceived. Readers of Gertrude Stein are familiar with the method. "Not in any other language could this be written differently," sings the Berners-Stein chorus, and this characteristic remark raised loud laughter which may or may not have been the intention of the authors. This mixture and uncertainty of motives is a chief element in much contemporary work and hits the taste of certain present-day audiences who so long as they can laugh do not bother how or why they laugh. The music is sufficiently characterless to fit in nicely with the odds and ends of Mr. Ashton's choreography and Miss Stein's words; but the ballet as a whole has plenty of harmless fun and is an amusing entertainment.

THE COMING WEEK

SATURDAY, May 1st—
- May Day Dance, Suffolk Galleries, 8. Tickets 2s. 6d.
- Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra. Queen's Hall, 8.30. And on May 2 at 3.15.

SUNDAY, May 2nd—
- W. B. Curry on "Michael Faraday and Scientific Method," Conway Hall, 11.
- "Generation of Conquerors," Film Society, New Gallery, 2.30.
- Thos. Vernon on "The Social Price of Re-arming," 153 Finchley Rd., 6.15.
- "The Road to Damascus," Stage Society Production, Westminster.

MONDAY, May 3rd—
- Dr. Josiah Oldfield on "New Life Begins," Hotel Russell, 4.
- V. K. Krishna Menon on "Indian Awakening," Large Memorial Hall, 8.
- John Jagger, M.P., Seymour Cocks, M.P., and R. Perry Poole, on "Spain," Islington Town Hall, 8.
- S. Cash on "The Eclipse of the Communist Party," 39 Doughty Street, 8.30.

TUESDAY, May 4th—
- Sir Francis Younghusband on "World Fellowship Through Religion." Friends House, 1.20.
- Dramatic Reading by Laurence Housman, Aubrey House, Campden Hill, 3.
- "Sarah Simple," Garrick.

WEDNESDAY, May 5th—
- Dr. Har Dayal on "World Economic Problems," Caxton Hall, 8.

THURSDAY, May 6th—
- George Lansbury on "My Visit to Berlin," Friends House, 1.20.
- Stage Society Discussion on "The Road to Damascus," Oddenino's, 8.30.

FRIDAY, May 7th—
- Meeting organised by National Joint Committee for Spanish Relief. Speakers: Dean of Chichester, Duchess of Atholl, M.P., Ellen Wilkinson, M.P., Wilfrid Roberts, M.P. and Thos. McEwen, part-owner of "Seven Seas Spray." Chairman: Eleanor Rathbone. Queen's Hall, 8.

Current Literature

BOOKS IN GENERAL

AFTER an interval of only some three thousand years, during which kings have usurped the duties of the general and the statesman, royalty has during the last century been gradually reduced to its original function—the making of magic. In eighteenth-century England a governing class which crudely underrated the profound and, it now seems, ineradicable superstitiousness of the human heart, imported on to the throne a German, to whom no one could attribute magic powers. (Anne was the last English monarch to touch for scrofula, the King's Evil.) But during the last years of Queen Victoria's reign the sorcery again began to work. The people did not know that her wilfulness, obstinacy and prejudice were untrammelled by the faintest consideration for her ministers; and on the rare occasions when she issued from her awful seclusion, the royal person seemed hedged by the dignity of a *Bona Dea*, at once appalling and benign. No doubt the extension of the franchise to increasingly uneducated persons made the deification politic, while the simultaneous growth of the popular press made it possible. In the last years of George V, the magic became more potent than ever: conservative persons deplored the submergence of the traditional English attitude to monarchy, but tried to console themselves with the hope that king-worship would act as a lightning-conductor against the incomparably more alarming idolatry of dictators. When Edward VIII succeeded, he had more *mana* than any of his predecessors since the Middle Ages. England had lost her father, and taken a lover in his place. At once he committed the sin most unforgivable in one's lover—he fell in love. The country would have supported (but not, I think, welcomed) a marriage of convenience. Even a discreet liaison would have been condoned. But he was in love, with a schoolboy's pride and impetuosity and disregard of *tenue*. The governing classes disliked him, because he disliked them. And the people forsook him, because he preferred a woman's love to theirs. It was the highbrows, the persons least affected by the royal *mana*, who most regretted him, though he seemed as resolutely lowbrow as most members of his House. (It is odd how few of the Prince Consort's descendants inherited any of his intellectual and aesthetic interests.) It was not that we were bowled over by a "Romance"—Dryden's tragedy was called *All for Love, or the World Well Lost*, not *All for Marriage*. And the traditional European custom of permanent marriage (tempered, if need be, by liaisons) seems more sensible than the transatlantic habit of flying to the divorce-court and the registrar whenever you fall in love with someone new. But we sympathised passionately with the King's hatred of humbug, and when he was dethroned largely for this virtue, we were passionately disgusted by the abuse his subjects showered upon him, and by the praise which they showered on themselves. Hell knows no fury like a woman scorned, of course, but must she be smug, as well as furious? Not very discreet either are the exaggerated box-office attempts to turn George VI into a carbon-copy of his father, and to build him and his wife and children up, as if they were film-stars, instead of decent people undertaking conscientiously a most ticklish task.

* * *

In public utterances the general rage of disappointment with Edward VIII has found a scapegoat in the circle of his friends. Yet among them were (and still are, for these did not rat) persons of uncommon culture, unblemished reputation, and excellent sense. There is also a fact which is often forgotten. You often hear people sympathising with the Royal Family because they work so hard. It is doubtful if any of them have hours comparable with those demanded of successful barristers, to say nothing of the abominably sweated employees in fashionable hotels. The real cruelty of the royal job is more refined. For our benefit the descendants of kings are segregated and fed upon adulation, yet obliged by silent pressure to extreme conventionality. Willy-nilly, they are free from many ordinary anxieties, as is a lunatic in a padded cell or a capon in a coop. They have hardly any friends—only relations and courtiers who too often have the mentality of upper servants. Our unlucky Royalties must never express an opinion which would shock the most conservative of their countrymen—in fact they must take their politics from the *Times*, their religion from the Archbishop of Canterbury, and their taste from the President of the Royal Academy. From infancy they have been preserved from contact with opinions other than these, so that they hardly even realise their deprivation. But it is hardly surprising that ennui should be the malady of monarchs, a malady from which historically they have sought refuge in every conceivable diversion from clock-making to incest. King Edward VII was blessed with high vitality, he could eat enormously, he could gamble. Even so he was blamed for requiring friends belonging to a more invigorating race than ours. Edward VIII lacked his grandfather's hearty sensuality, and had no compensating passion for books or pictures or music. At the same time he was too intelligent to be a philatelist. After being promenaded, like some miracle-working image, round hospital-wards and in front of troops, after shaking hands with rich men and poor men, mayoresses and matrons—they were not scrofulous, but they burned to touch the King—he needed to be amused, needed it comprehensibly and desperately. Why did he like "rackety foreigners"? Because they were the only people, one may hazard, who could avoid treating him with imprisoning respect, and on whose fun the august presence did not put a damper. In old days there were Court Jesters for just this purpose.

* * *

Some such reflections linger in the mind, when one has been looking at the numerous books produced in connection with the Abdication and the Coronation. Mr. Forster reviewed *The Magic of Monarchy* in these columns last week, and Mr. Geoffrey Dennis's remarkably interesting *Coronation Commentary*, which I have just been reading, has been made the subject of an injunction, and might, therefore, be dangerous to discuss. Of the others Lord Holden's *Four Generations of Our Royal Family* (Allen and Unwin, 10*s*.) is the most agreeable and the most enlightening, though I think it contains no new information, and the author's comments are conspicuously restrained. His method, indeed, is to let the facts speak for themselves, and he quotes with silent irony the silliest remarks from Queen Victoria's enthralling and extraordinary correspondence. His book, including its illustrations, is an admirable example of stealthy mischievousness—what the French call "pince-sans-rire." Then, to illustrate an aspect of royalty, let me quote from Mr. Hector Bolitho's *Royal Progress* (Batsford, 7*s*. 6*d*.). He is talking of our new Monarch:

> There is a tale of his annual boy's camp which must delight us. It must be remembered that the Duke of York's Camp was his own idea. He wished to bring public school boys and boys from the industrial areas together . . . a perfect scheme, which has done immense good. Every year he spends a day with the boys and he usually enters into their games. One day they were playing push-ball and it was suggested that he might referee. He answered, "Referee be blowed, I am going to play." During the game, a public school boy was pushing at the ribs of the player in front of him and he yelled. "Go on, push like Hell." He was perhaps surprised when he saw the Duke turn his head a little and answer, "But I *am* pushing like hell."

It would be difficult to invent a more pointless little anecdote than this. But it "must delight us," merely because it divulges the astonishing fact that Highness has allowed ordinary shoulders to push at its ribs, has even condescended to the use of a schoolboy swear-word. The deeper our veneration for the royal *mana*, the more enchanted we are by an occasional reminder that it emanates from one who is, after all, in some ways human. *Royal Progress* is quite enchantingly illustrated with 141 plates, which in themselves are worth seven and six.

Moreover, if Mr. Bolitho carries adulation of royalty rather far for some tastes, this only makes his book more significant: it renders articulate the sentiments of the more uneducated Middle Classes.

* * *

The monarchy is more important than the monarch, we are told, with the comforting deduction that we saved the one by sacrificing the other. It may be so—some of us are not so sure—the future will show. But one fact is too generally passed over. If the King had chosen, he could have fought on incomparably more favourable ground. He could have refused to answer Mr. Baldwin's hypothetical questions—has Mr. Baldwin ever been known to answer such questions himself? He could have said "Mrs. Simpson is not free to marry," had himself crowned, waited till the decree was made absolute, then, perfectly legally, married her, and presented the Government with a *fait accompli*. Could they then even have tried to turn him out? He preferred a more disadvantageous, a more scrupulous, course. And consequently he went. There are those who suggest that his visit to the Welsh Special Areas was wrong, because against the desires of his ministers. (It is amusing to surmise what Queen Victoria would have said to anyone suggesting that she had not the right of going to any part of her kingdom.) The King's behaviour during the crisis suggests surely that he would always have respected most punctiliously the spirit of constitutional monarchy. Or do you prefer to fancy that somewhere, deep down, unknown probably even to himself, he really wanted to go? That though he might have liked to rule, he did not care merely to reign, merely to be a totem, potent but pinioned and inanimate?

RAYMOND MORTIMER

PUSHKIN

Pushkin. By ERNEST J. SIMMONS. *Oxford Press.* 18s.

For most of us, Pushkin is still the Great Unknown of Russian literature—the writer who is always being mentioned. In the end this has a comic effect, especially by the light of verse fragments which seldom contain anything visibly beyond the reach of Longfellow in his less-inspired moments. "Il est plat, votre poète," said Flaubert candidly to Turgenev, on hearing a sample. He overlooked the fact that to evaporate in translation is the nature of supreme poetry. And, in Pushkin's case, the style gone, what else was there to lay hold of? Pushkin had no message. He had no attitude. He had neither the brow of Cain, nor the voice of one crying in the wilderness. With all his passion for art, he was not an aesthete on Flaubert's model. And in spite of his escapades and "uneven" character, he was anything but a "Russian soul" *à la* Dostoevski. He represented only the normal, raised to a higher power.

There is nothing, perhaps, more baffling than complete straightforwardness; Pushkin's behaviour was full of contrasts, the result, not of oddity, but of spontaneity. He said and did what occurred to him. He might be charming and simple—or densely sulky—or "indescribably splendid"—or, again, just as indescribably tiresome. In youth especially, sheer excess of vitality made him irritating; he would show off, make a nuisance of himself, scatter venomous remarks in pure levity, and, if the victim wounded his "honour" by a remonstrance, retort with a challenge. "The unfortunate traits in his character were nearest the surface"—he was disliked, very commonly, by acquaintances, and loved by those who knew most of him. Pushkin the gambler, rowdy, and Don Juan was visible to everyone—and always intelligible; not everyone had an eye for his warm, constant friendships, his intellectual seriousness, or his devotion to art. Yet this last, not the racketing that made such a stir, was his real centre. "Pushkin had none of Byron's insincere contempt for the muse. His art was not a plaything or a refuge or an avocation; it was life itself. And when he finally ceased to be interested in poetry, when the complexities, the pain, and the tragedy of life eventually strangled his muse, he no longer cared to go on living."

The detail of this eclipse is a tragic drama which makes Byron's look as artificial as the *Corsair* or the *Bride of Abydos*. It is also a first-rate satire on absolutism.

Pushkin's gift had ruined him before he was twenty-one; he never got free of his youthful verses in praise of liberty. Five years of exile and constant surveillance were the immediate result; and at the end of them, he escaped only to a worse fate—the Tsar's "pardon."

At the time, it seemed the beginning of a new life. Pushkin was ready to conform; he was a liberal, but not by temperament a politician, and he had no desire to sacrifice his vocation to a lost cause. Moreover, he was easily affected by generosity; the Tsar's noble gesture of forgiveness moved him to tears. Nicholas, however, though he had "forgotten the old Pushkin," did not forget to hand the new one over to Benkendorf and his secret police; and it became Benkendorf's amusement to prevent the troublesome fellow in all his doings. Pushkin found himself checked and lectured like a schoolboy at every turn, monotonously suspected of being up to no good, and, on the least show of independence, rebuked for ingratitude. A paternal government even instructed him how to write. "I had the happiness to present to the emperor your comedy on Tsar Boris and Grishka Otrepev. His Majesty has deigned to read the same with great satisfaction, and I present the following report in his own hand: 'I consider that Mr. Pushkin's purpose would be attained if, with some necessary chastening, he turned his comedy into an historical tale or romance after the manner of Walter Scott.'" Pushkin's aim had been to inaugurate a renascence of the Russian drama. Later, when he was engaged on an historical study and applied for access to certain documents, the Tsar wrote: "What does he want these papers for? They have been lying untouched in the archives since my grandmother ordered them placed there. Even I have not read them. Let Pushkin get along without them." And so on. In fact, to Nicholas he was still (in spite of phrases) "the old Pushkin"—disaffected, untrustworthy, a nuisance which must be prevented from becoming a danger; while to the young generation he was a lost leader, a reactionary survival.

The climax came with his marriage to a young beauty. To secure Natalya Pushkin's attendance at the court balls, Nicholas hit on the expedient of making her husband "page of the chamber"—condemning a man of thirty-four, "a great poet and a public figure," to an office held usually by lads of eighteen. Pushkin wanted to refuse, but was overborne. He tried to escape, and was met by the entreaties of friends and the usual charge of ingratitude. He had to dance attendance in Petersburg, the hanger-on of a fashionable society which laughed at him, while the Tsar (so it was reported) made love to his wife. Another year of this humiliation, and of financial anxiety, brought him to the end of his tether; it is easy to believe that jealousy of D'Anthès was only the focus of a universal despair.

> He had reached a point where it was difficult to go on living. His total debt had reached one hundred and twenty thousand rubles, a stupendous sum for a man in his position. Nearly everything he owned was mortgaged, and most of the personal effects on which he could borrow had already been pawned. Yet the social life his wife loved increased his living expenses every month. He knew that he was still being spied on, and that he was regarded as a suspicious person by the authorities. His position as gentleman of the chamber made him ridiculous in everybody's eyes and more so in his own. Peace and leisure for work were denied him, and he felt that his creative powers were failing.

The crisis was a relief to him; on sending the fatal challenge, he felt as though delivered "from some unbearable pain." And afterwards, he said to a friend who talked of recovery: "There is no living for me here; I shall die. That is clear, and it must be so."

Pushkin safely dead, Nicholas made a handsome provision for the widow and children. But the government did not omit the opportunity of rating those editors who showed a misplaced fervour in their obituaries. "Why the black border about the news of the death of a man who was not an official? And why the expression 'the sun of poetry'? Then, for goodness' sake—'Pushkin died in the middle of his great career!' What was this career of his?"

Satire could not have improved on this parting question.

Mr. Simmons's first virtue is thoroughness; his book is too long if anything, but it is a fault, in this case, on the right side. His style lacks distinction, but he is moderate, unbiased, and sympathetic—he inspires confidence. Notes and index are admirable; and there is a bibliography giving all the information, of every kind, which could possibly be wanted for further study. In short, few centenary lives approach this one in scholarship or intelligence; and no one with any curiosity about Pushkin should fail to read it.

K. JOHN

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The Week-end Review

Literary Supplement

SATURDAY, MAY 1, 1937

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ADDRESS TO DEATH

FOR us, born into a world
Of fledged, instinctive trees,
Of lengthening days, snowfall at Christmas
And sentried palaces,

You were the one our parents
Could not forget or forgive—
A remittance-man, a very very
Distant relative.

We read your name in the family
Bible. It was tabu
At meals and lessons, but in church sometimes
They seemed to be praying for you.

You lived overseas, we gathered :
And lying in bed safe
We thought of you when we heard the indrawn
Breath of the outcast surf.

Later we heard them saying
You had done well in the War :
And though you could never come home to us,
We saw your name everywhere.

When home grew unsympathetic,
You were all the rage for a while—
The favourite uncle with the blank cheque-book
And the understanding smile.

Some of us went to look for you
In aeroplanes and fast cars ;
Some tried the hospitals, some took to vice,
And others consulted the stars.

But now, sir, that you may be going
To visit us any night,
We watch the french-windows, picturing you
In rather a different light.

The house, we perceive, is shabby,
There's dry-rot in the wood :
It's a poor welcome and it won't keep you out
And we wish we had been good.

But there's no time now for spring-cleaning,
Or mending a broken lock.
We are here in the shrouded drawing-room till
Your first, your final knock.

C. DAY LEWIS

FAR HORIZONS

HE was a short thick-set man, and he was standing at the corner of the road. He wore a blue serge suit, a black muffler, his hands were thrust deep in his pockets, he shifted continuously from one foot to the other, and he stared always the one way. Across the slag-heap. I had seen this man standing in the same place on more than one occasion, but I did not take much notice for in this part of the world one sees many men standing at the corner of the streets and roads. But it was the odd look in his eye, the curious expression upon his face that prompted me to say to a friend, " That man seems always to be standing in the same place. Every morning when I leave the house he has stood there, and the position is always the same. Does he ever move from there at all ? " I enquired, for I had the idea that somehow he was rooted to that particular spot in the road.

" Oh aye ! " my companion said. " Dai Jones. Yes, always he stands there. Every morning, every afternoon, every evening, every day, every week, oh, for months and months, but I don't know where he do go at night. Maybe he goes home and just stands like that in the kitchen. But I don't know, of course. Ah ! Everybody knows Dai Jones. He's been stood there just on five years now. Aye ! All of us knows Dai Jones. One time we used to feel sorry for him, but now—well, Christ Amighty, everybody stands about now. You hear all kinds of rumours about him. Local parson hates the sight of him. Never goes to the chapel at all now. Parson sees him standing there in the very same place, on God's day just same as everybody's day, and parson says, ' One day that man will just explode. Blow into little pieces.' He's got five kids Dai Jones, and a missus, but he don't see much of them. How can he ? Always standing in the same bloody place."

" But I wonder what he's thinking about ? " I said.

" Damned if I know. He mightn't be thinking about anything. You'd have to ask him, and then he mightn't say a word to you. That's another thing, too. Makes people think he's going dippy, I don't know. Three or four fellers gone from here same way, though they didn't stand like him, like they were stuck to the bloody stones. But he does. Aye ! He's a landmark, Dai Jones is. He's in the same bloody boat as us, and we feel sorry for him. You see, you can't do anything for him at all now, 'cept bury him. One time he would go and sit in the library with the other fellers, we all do that when it rains, but he don't go there now, and he told a mate of mine the other day that he hates being in the house. Everybody's tried to help him, its bloody hard lines, but you can't do nowt now. He's what we call a goner, d'you see. Has no more interest in nothing. That's Dai Jones. Course you see everything goes on just the same, the world goes round, and he's stood there like a bloody loony, and here and there you'll find others, all standing about, but they're not like Dai Jones. He were a decent chap, too. I remember the time when he were doing regular by his pit and then it shut down like all the others. He isn't the feller he were by no means. Muscles like tripe. He's what I call a feeling man. He's a chap who'd cry to see his muscles go like that. Maybe that's what he thinks about all the time. But as I said we don't know his mind, so we don't understand him. Once I offered him a Woodbine and I got a lump in me throat when he backed away, just like a frightened bloody dog he was, an' of course he can't help it, no doubt, but I never been near him since. Mind you when he goes to the office for his relief he's just ordinary like ourselves, and then next time you see him there he is standing on the same bloody old spot, like he was glued there. Everybody's sorry for him, but as I said you can't do nowt. The man's broke up. Look at the way he stares at that slag-heap like it might be one of the corridors leading into Hell. He's going dippy Dai Jones is, mister. Ah ! But listen to this, he's got a queer idea in his head now. Yes, a queer idea in his head. He's just waiting for the others,

he told a mate of mine. See. All the fellers are going to go like him, dippy, loony, mister, then he's going to make them charge that bloody slag-heap. Aye. Poor . . . that's how it is with him. Ah, but he's calm now. Aye. One time he were a holy terror. I remember a lady come down here one day giving cigarettes out to us fellers and he did something with his two fingers at her and parson heard about it and he said in the pulpit that Sunday: 'Brethren, this is the Revenge of Hell.' Course us fellers laughed, but lately mister I been thinking there were something in what parson said. Only man who never talked about that was Dai Jones. And one morning he were standing just where he is now and a Mrs. Richards, a kind old lady she was, she'd dead now, she went up to Dai and offered him a packet of fags and she says: 'What are you always staring at Dai Jones,' and he said, 'Far Horizons, Missis,' and that's how we got the idea he were going dippy, d'you see. Aye! Him staring at far horizons. He were a one for long words. One time he used to write poetry. Poor . . . Now he just stands. We're all in this black ring, Mister, and no parson made it either, and no Jesus either. Just a bloody big black ring, Mister, and you see Dai Jones there. Well, what's he staring at, I ask you? Far horizons. Ain't no horizons here, mister, 'cept that bloody black shelf, and his eye's almost ransacked it by now, and parson he says what's going to be done about Telyn y Wig which changed its name overnight and one bright morning called itself Hell. That's what everybody asks, mister."

One morning the following week something extraordinary happened. Dai Jones was no longer on the corner. Dai Jones had suddenly vanished. It seemed as though a part of the history of that road had gone with him, that corner looked strangely empty. And people passed to and fro, nodded their heads, were silent, or loudly expressive, and I wondered at this dramatic departure. Later I met a friend and I asked him if he had seen anything of Dai Jones. He stared at me astonishedly for a second or so and then burst out: "Seen him? Seen him," he said. "Where were you mister when they took him away from that corner, took him away to Heaven mister. Aye! Where all the loopy ones go to. Nobody would have took much notice of Dai 'cept a kid who run to the butcher saying: 'Mister. You should hear Dai Jones, the things he's saying and laughing all the while. I laughed myself. He was saying, oh, but you should just hear him for yourself.' And then the butcher told parson and he came running out from his garden. 'Dai Jones is ready to be taken away now. The world has no crack in it as he says.' So they had to take him, d'you see. Mind you I don't know whether he were really barmy all those years, I don't know, I think he were out of the pit about six years. Anyhow he's gone and everybody'll miss him standing there now, though we used to hate seeing him. Queer to me, mister, but sometimes sad things are funny too, and funny things are sad. Ah, well! Poor . . . but there you are, mister, and there'll be lots more like Dai Jones, and you say you come from up London. Well, when are they going to do something?"

James Hanley

MARRIAGE REFORM IN FRANCE

Marriage. By Léon Blum. Translated from the French by Warre Bradley Wells. *Jarrolds.* 10*s.* 6*d.*

The English reader who wishes to enjoy this book to the full should imagine it to be written by Mr. Baldwin or Mr. Ramsay MacDonald. That a Prime Minister should be able to publish a book dealing with sexual subjects which is candid, personally frank, and free from cant must seem to any English-speaking person almost miraculous. Some young people have imagined, it is true, that we are less given to humbug than the Victorians; but the circumstances of Edward VIII's abdication must have shown them their mistake. I have searched in vain for any trace of humbug in Monsieur Blum's book: the French variety is as absent as the English. Nowhere does he pretend to be more "virtuous" than men are; never once does he mention *la patrie*; there is no plea for a higher birth-rate, and not a word about the sacred institution of the family. So far as I can discover, the sole motive of the book is to promote human happiness.

The thesis of the book is simple, and would seem less revolutionary in this country than in France. It is, that girls, as well as young men, should sow their wild oats. M. Blum believes that the great majority of men and women are instinctively polygamous in youth, but become monogamous gradually if they have sufficient variety of experience. He thinks that women at about thirty, and men at about thirty-five, become ripe for marriage, provided their earlier years have been spent in love-affairs not intended to be permanent. This system, the anthropologists tell us, is practised with much success in the South Sea Islands. But M. Blum does not rely upon anthropological evidence; he argues his points mainly by means of anecdotes drawn from his own experience and that of his friends. These anecdotes make the book very easy and pleasant reading. Most English people know little of French life except from novels, which are not very reliable guides, and are out of date unless they are very recent. Women, he says, marry too young, and are compelled to seek experience by means of adultery. For example: he saw one day in the street a young woman who looked attractive; he followed her on foot for miles; at last she turned round and remarked on his pursuit; they conversed, and he found that in two hours she was returning to her husband in the country. During those two hours much occurred. If she had had such adventures before marriage, he maintains, she would not have wanted them after becoming a wife.

The book is almost entirely concerned with personal happiness, and there is very little to show that the author is a Socialist politician. The connection of marriage—as opposed to affairs—with property and social position is taken for granted, but nowhere explicitly discussed. There is not a word about the effect which a socialist economic system might be expected to have on marriage. There is very little about children. The theory is that if women, as well as men, have had adequate experience before marriage, the great majority of marriages will be fairly happy, and the occasions for divorce will be few. Of course, divorce should be easily obtainable when it is desired:

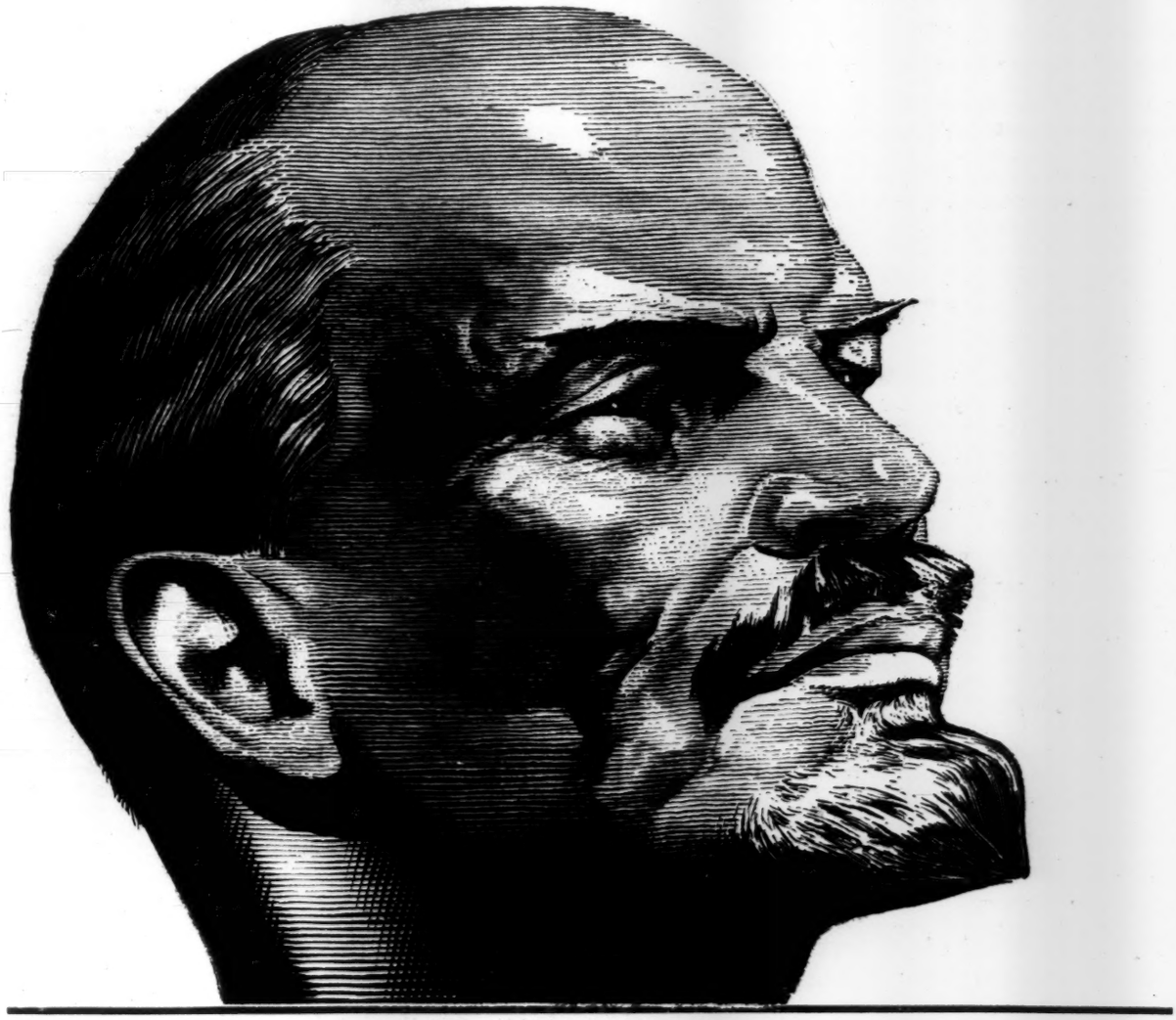
> I have no difficulty in subscribing to the view that divorce should continue, and even that it should be made easier. In particular, it is essential that it should be granted on the demand of one of the contracting parties alone. It is obvious that a husband and wife who have agreed upon a divorce might, at a pinch, go on living together, since they are capable of agreeing about something. But no life in common is possible for two people who cannot agree even about separating. It is essential, therefore, that divorce should be easy; but I assume that it will be rare.

M. Blum is very much the opposite of a romantic. In the present state of affairs, he says, a love-marriage is almost bound to end in a divorce; whereas, if you marry a man because he has a title, or a girl because she has money, "these are advantages which do not disappear. You continue to have the same reasons for letting the marriage go on as you had for entering into it." "You may tell me," he says, "that I have a very commonplace turn of mind. For my part, I have never been able to regard any action as inspiring simply because it is unreasonable." The Age of Reason is not dead yet! Nor has he failed to act upon reason in regulating his own life. He recounts, for example, a conversation with a girl named Colette, who is informing him that she is about to make a rich marriage. "I'm a girl with no dowry," she observes, "as you know better than anybody else." On this he comments:

> Her hint was so direct that I was taken aback. To be sure, if Colette had had any money, or I myself had had any money, how promptly we should have recognised our close friendship as love! I knew very well that I attracted her. For my part, what chance would I ever have of finding another girl so suited to make me happy?

The reader who, at this point, expects an attack on the capitalist system will be disappointed. If he feels inclined to regard M. Blum's prudence as cold-blooded he should reflect that, in all likelihood, if he had married rashly, France would, at this moment, be less well governed.

It must not be supposed that the author is in any degree unaware of the connection of marriage problems with the economic system. "It is obvious," he says, "that any question of morals is bound up with social questions. While I have not gone out of my way to emphasise this relationship in this book, I do not want to look as though I were evading the consequences which derive from it. Nevertheless, it is the ethical point of view, not



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the social point of view, which I have deliberately adopted."

The system which M. Blum advocates is already practised to a considerable extent in England, though I fear it will be a long time before it is publicly defended by a Prime Minister. It is undoubtedly an improvement on the old system, if only on grounds of justice. Whether it will achieve as much as he hopes may, I think, be questioned. No doubt a certain percentage of mankind become instinctively monogamous after a certain amount of experience, but probably an equal percentage would find a habit of promiscuity hard to break. On the whole, the Scandinavian countries seem to be the most successful in avoiding great unhappiness in marriage, and they do so by means of easy divorce. However that may be, every humane person should be grateful to M. Blum, not only for his candour and honesty, but for still thinking personal happiness important in these days of battle-cries and creed wars. There is not a word in the whole book that is fierce or bitter or doctrinaire. Bertrand Russell

COAL AND CASTE

The Road to Wigan Pier. By George Orwell. *Gollancz.* 10*s.* 6*d.*

Mr. Orwell has written a Black Guide to England, explained his own conflict with English caste-consciousness, sketched the intangible but very real battle-front of North and South, peered with fascinated horror into the homes (if that is the word) of the totally submerged poor and into the minds (if that, etc.) of the vaguely well-to-do, rubbed some gritty rock-salt into the sore places of conventional Socialism, and got in some resounding thwacks at Anglo-Communism, tinned food, *Punch*, the highbrows of "the snootier magazines," the "leisure" Utopians, and much else. All in one book. And as Mr. Orwell can do a first-rate job of descriptive reporting, can hit hard at cant wherever it seems to him to show its head, can instinctively pack plenty of disputatious matter into one paragraph, it is a living and lively book from start to finish. The honest Tory must face what he tells and implies, and the honest Socialist must face him, too. It may be hard for Mr. Orwell to accept such praise from such a notoriously snooty quarter as Great Turnstile: it is fairly clear that The New Statesman and Nation is as a pink rag to his bull-wrath. But he must take it.

His exploration of the English scene opens with a stay in a slum lodging-house in the North: four beds to the room, and a tripe and pigs' trotters shop downstairs. Mr. Orwell has a positively Gissingesque genius for finding the dingiest house in the most sunless street, and he sketches the horribly self-contained, sub-human universe of his landlord and fellow-lodgers with a precision which, at one point or another, pricks each of one's senses in turn into revolt.

> The meals at the Brookers' house were uniformly disgusting. For breakfast you got two rashers of bacon and a pale fried egg, and bread-and-butter which had often been cut overnight and always had thumb-marks on it. . . . I could never induce Mr. Brooker to let me cut my own bread-and-butter; he *would* hand it to me slice by slice, each slice gripped firmly under that broad, black thumb. . . . Several bottles of Worcester Sauce and a half-full jar of marmalade lived permanently on the table. It was usual to souse everything, even a piece of cheese, with Worcester Sauce, but I never saw anyone brave the marmalade jar, which was an unspeakable mass of stickiness and dust. Mrs. Brooker . . . had a habit of constantly wiping her mouth on one of her blankets. Towards the end of my stay she took to tearing strips of newspaper for this purpose, and in the morning the floor was often littered with crumpled-up balls of slimy paper which lay there for hours. The smell of the kitchen was dreadful, but, as with that of the bedroom, you ceased to notice it after a while.

And that is a comparatively mild passage. I am no anthropologist, but I doubt whether the most rudimentary peoples of the New Hebrides or Papua could produce anything to match the incident (p. 17) which decided Mr. Orwell to leave, and of which he only mildly remarks—"the place was beginning to depress me."

This is followed by a picture on a bigger scale. A good many people have described the toil of the coal-miner underground, and tried to convey some sense, not so much of its danger, but of the day-in, day-out demands which the work makes on the bodily endurance of the miner, boy and man, through year after year. Glimpses of that continuous muscular and nervous war with darkness, stifling heat, bodily constriction, disease, may be caught now and then in the chill air of some official inquiry into a colliery explosion. Mr. Orwell offers a full, coherent description of the travail, more clear and more telling than any that has happened to come my way. To the expert or the experienced it may (and I suspect does) present loopholes for criticism; but to a great majority of people, who merely take it for granted that their household scuttles simply cost thirty-two-and-sixpence a ton to fill, such a description of human cost is, to say the very least of it, salutary. The hardships and squalor of modern warfare have been elaborated often; so far as such things are commensurable, work at the coal-face is an equivalent, going on all the time; the miners are in many ways the "poor bloody infantry" behind whose line we others live our lives. The point about coal-mining, which Mr. Orwell does not say enough about, is the extraordinarily powerful community sense of its workers: the hereditary zeal for the pits and the work of the pits, the vocational pride in the relentless demands that coal-winning makes on one generation after another. It persists, as he is aware, through even the harshest trials of unemployment, in coalfields where the prospects of a renewal of activity seem almost totally obliterated—a kind of racial ardour. And yet, how anomalous the interests of the race can be! One day last winter I crouched in a scooped-out hole on the side of a slag-heap in one of the stricken Welsh valleys. There were three miners there, scrabbling for fragments of coal in the tip; three or four hours of probing would, with luck, fill three-quarters of a sack; none of them had had anything like full-time work for seven or eight years; there was a stabbing cold wind. But what did they chiefly talk about? The valley beneath was solidly "Red." But the talk ran on football, on a whippet belonging to one of them, which sat there comfortably in a trim, warm, tautly strapped jacket beside the sack, and on the evening's rehearsal of a cantata, in which two of them would be taking part, entitled *The Celestial City*. A digression: but, to the foreigner, an odd sidelight.

The second half of Mr. Orwell's book, divided from the first by a clever set of photographic "documentaries," turns to an informal survey of political implications. It is personal, unorthodox, refreshing, pungent, and nicely calculated to vex those who are Socialists in their heads rather than by blood. From an unusually varied experience of life (of which his earlier books have given some account), Mr. Orwell has extracted some lessons

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which cannot be readily ignored. He is not primarily concerned with "the Party" or the Marxian dialectic or plans for the next *x* years. But he is very much concerned with the general psychological attitude of the educated middle class of this country (to which he belongs—and knows it) towards the economic-political problem raised by what he has seen of life in England and elsewhere. He is acutely aware that class-consciousness is not to be exorcised by good will or by verbal argument:

> . . . it is not so much like a stone wall as the plate-glass pane of an aquarium; it is so easy to pretend that it is not there, and so impossible to get through it. Unfortunately, it is nowadays the fashion to pretend that the glass is penetrable. . . . Not only the *croyant et pratiquant* Socialist, but every "intellectual" takes it as a matter of course that *he* at least is outside the class-racket; *he*, unlike his neighbours, can see through the absurdity of wealth, ranks, titles, etc., etc. "I'm not a snob" is nowadays a kind of universal *credo*. Who is there who has not jeered at the House of Lords, the military caste, the Royal Family, the public schools, the huntin' and shootin' people, the old ladies in Cheltenham boarding-houses, the horrors of "county" society and the social hierarchy generally? To do so has become an automatic gesture.

This trend, in its wider aspects, he regards as not merely futile, but as in general tending "to intensify class-prejudice." And it certainly can lead to a senseless confusion of issues.

> If you are a bourgeois "intellectual" you too readily imagine that you have somehow become un-bourgeois because you find it easy to laugh at patriotism and the C. of E. and the Old School Tie and Colonel Blimp and all the rest of it. But from the point of view of the proletarian "intellectual," who at least by origin is genuinely outside the bourgeois culture, your resemblances to Colonel Blimp may be more important than your differences. Very likely he looks upon you and Colonel Blimp as practically equivalent persons; and in a way he is right. . . .

These are not the most important of Mr. Orwell's arguments in his examination of the class dilemma in political groupings to-day. But they have considerable force, and should be read and pondered both by those who too readily imagine themselves emancipated from the illogical structure of an unsatisfactory society, and by those who, in his words, find themselves challenged in their secret beliefs and "driven back to a frightened conservatism." And there are plenty of both.

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This is an important and interesting book. Lord Ilchester, both in his affection for his home and his knowledge of it, sets an example to all owners of historic property. He writes of his relatives who previously lived in the house with a fondness which is refreshing. The first Lord Holland, familiar to readers of Gray from the verses beginning "Old, and abandon'd by each venal friend," is notorious from his embezzlement of public funds when at the Pay Office, but he appears in this book no worse than his contemporaries in public life and far better than them in private life. Readers of early nineteenth-century memoirs are accustomed to regard Lady Holland, the third Peer's wife, as an amusing but immoral woman. Did not Coke of Norfolk refuse to have her in his house? In this book she appears a devoted wife and exemplary mother who had the misfortune to be married, when she first met Lord Holland, to a man who was half brute, half maniac. It is pleasant in the twentieth century, when readers fasten eagerly on human frailties, and enjoy seeing them exposed, to find attention focused on the better side of human beings.

Building on Holland House was begun in 1605 and probably finished in 1606. John Thorpe was the architect. James I was an early guest of the original owner, Sir Walter Cope, but did not stay long because, as he said, "the wind blew through the walls, that he could not lie warm in his bed." The next owner was Henry Rich, Lord Holland, who was executed by the Parliamentarians in 1649. The family of Rich Lord Holland was represented in the eighteenth century by the first Lord Kensington, who sold the house to Henry Fox, later Lord Holland, in 1768. It is interesting to notice that the title was defective and some sixty years later the third Lord Holland had to pay £4,000 to perfect the title. It is well known that wealthy as the first Lord Holland of the Fox family was, even his fortune was insufficient to bear the fantastic gambling extravagances of his sons Stephen and Charles James. Unfortunately, some of the furniture and books in the house were sold in 1775 and brought in the large sum for those days of £4,500. Stephen Fox, who died very shortly after his father, had two children with whom this book is principally concerned—the third baron and Miss Caroline Fox. The latter was a remarkable personality, fiercely devoted to her house and family, who rejected a proposal of marriage from Jeremy Bentham. It is surprising to find that unromantic, rather grim personality writing to her on his eightieth birthday, "From that day not a single one has passed (not to mention nights) on which you have not engrossed more of my thoughts than you could have wished." One of the most interesting things in this book, which is new to me, is Napoleon's suggestion to Charles James Fox of a kind of League of Nations. He apparently divided the world into eastern and western nations, urged that the laws and customs of each should be respected and supported by all Governments and suggested that whoever attempted to disturb them should be considered an instigator of civil war. Lady Holland's description of Josephine, whom they met in 1803, is extraordinarily vivid: "Her figure and *tournure* are perfect, her taste in dress exquisite, but her face! Ghastly, deep furrows on each side of her mouth, fallen-in cheeks, shocking, disgusting, a worn-out hag."

It was under the third Baron and his wife that Holland House blossomed out in its full splendour and glory. A frequent guest once said: "I fully believe that if I had called for a slice of broiled rhinoceros with cobra sauce, it would have been brought to me on the instant." But it was something more than exotic food that attracted the long succession of distinguished guests to Holland House. Personally, having read something of Lord Holland, I regard him as a man whose company and society I should have thoroughly enjoyed. I admire the sturdiness of his Whiggery. His famous uncle once wrote to him, "I think your speech, whether well or ill given, reads very well indeed, but it was not the goodness of the speech only that I alluded to, it was the stoutness of fighting so well, all alone against them all." How his spirit would shock a Simonite Liberal! How swiftly the Fox Club would blackball him to-day! The only thing I can find against him is that he preferred Cambridge to Oxford, having been educated at the latter. Indeed he wrote of Oxford that he could not imagine a worse place for the education of a gentleman; "there is pedantry without science, insolence without learning, and intolerance without firmness." His name should be held in honour, if for not other reason than that he was one of the very few public men to protest against Great Britain's treatment of Napoleon. For

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CASSELL

this he received a letter of thanks from the members of Napoleon's family. Lady Holland, not to be outdone, urged her friends to send out parcels of books to St. Helena.

Lord and Lady Holland are worthy representatives of the age of privilege, of English society at its best. The success of their *salon* was based on the fact that the company they selected was distinguished rather than just socially eminent. Guests for dinner were invited for times varying from 5 o'clock to 7 o'clock, but the general hour for dinner was 6.30. The meal was served in the Gilt Room, the guests passing through it to assemble in one of the drawing rooms. After dinner the company adjourned to the library for coffee. John Cam Hobhouse—an exacting critic—after dining with the Hollands described his host as "the most delightful man alive."

It is greatly to be hoped that Lord Ilchester will carry on the history of the house in a further volume, as he suggests in the preface. As he rightly says: "Holland House now stands practically alone in its glory, almost the sole survivor of the great London houses." He implies that the future of the house may be imperilled owing to the threat by the local authorities to drive a modern road close to it. Should this be accomplished the grim prophecy of Macaulay may well be fulfilled and we shall "in vain seek, admidst new streets and squares and railway stations, for the site of that dwelling which was . . . the favourite resort of wits and beauties, of painters and poets, of scholars, philosophers and statesmen." But would not the public be more enthusiastic for its preservation if on occasion they could be admitted to see the historic treasures it contains?

ROGER FULFORD

A CITIZEN OF THE FUTURE

Letters to a Friend. By WINIFRED HOLTBY. *Collins.* 10*s.* 6*d.*

When I went up to Somerville in 1918 I found a myth, and next year, peace having been restored, the myth reappeared. It was Winifred Holtby, brilliant, witty, unconventional, and possessing a sense of responsibility to mankind rare in girls of her age, a sense which drove her into the W.A.A.C. almost as soon as she had espied the calm retreats of Oxford. Some of her contemporaries thought it was a pity: actually it seems to have been a good thing. It established her among the citizens of the future, those who realise that their lives do not belong only to themselves, and although, as these letters show, it was several years before she learned precisely what it was she wanted to do, the general outlines of her career were fixed for her in France, and she was spared the long uncertainty and searching with which so many of us wasted our twenties.

These letters were written to the friend she made in the W.A.A.C. camp at Huchenneville, and they cover the period from 1920 to 1935. They are lively, optimistic, full of the joy of living. But their importance is that they show the making of a great and useful woman. In her earlier years she is, like one of her pupils, "full of enthusiasms." By the time that she has reached maturity she is no less enthusiastic, but in a more constructive and canalised way. In 1925, just before visiting Africa, she writes to her friend: "Quite deliberately I am setting out . . . to study the business of politics—not the whole ground even of these, but especially the influence of educational propaganda upon international relations. This is no light nor whimsical inclination with me. It is the end slowly emerging from my experience since 1919, my sense of responsibility towards my fellows, and my increasing knowledge of my own capacities and limitations. If I alter my intention, it will be from my considered recognition that in some other way I can be of more use, and only for that." It is in this sense that Winifred Holtby was of importance and a pioneer, even though she never scanned unknown horizons, brought no new creed or knowledge to mankind, though she lived the greater part of her life in the security of England, and travelled abroad only under the respectable auspices of the League of Nations Union. And it is because she was a pioneer that the publication of these letters was worth making, that what she was may not die with herself. For, as she wrote another time, "I've got to fly where no woman flew before." It sounds a bit "purple" put like that, but she has in simpler words defined what she meant. "I believe that there is a need for a student of the problems of international war and peace; that this student should be a woman; should be blessed with the luck of an independent income so that she may be the servant of no party; should have had a historical training, some gift for articulation in speech and writing. . . . I believe that I will try to do this. I will not be frightened by my own ignorance and cowardice and stupidity. I will not be discouraged by the almost certain knowledge of failure. . . . I will not be dismayed because there is no profession to follow, no example to copy, because each step of the road must be my own to mark out and to choose." She did so, until she wore herself out and died, and by doing so she showed to other women that it was worth doing, and how it should be done. And if it be true, as I believe it to be, that if the future is to be any less bad than the past women as well as men must help to make it so, then what Winifred Holtby tried to do is worth remembering. And that she did not quite fail, that she got a hearing, is proved by the fact that, as I write these words, the first edition of this book, so her publishers say, has already been sold out. Her novels alone were not so striking as to account for this fact.

But as one reads these letters, so full of incident and excitement, as one watches her watch history in the making at Geneva, talk with men and women who will be remembered when we are forgotten, one begins to wonder whether, to be truly a servant of mankind, one needs to sacrifice quite so thoroughly one's individual soul. "I suppose I am a Martha," she cries in '27. Always busy, always pouring out her energy in lectures, journalism, novels, generous deeds for others, or journeys in pursuit of knowledge, which again will be poured out almost before she has digested it, she seems to leave too little time for absorption. Her taste in music, pictures, people, even literature, remains undeveloped, sometimes second-rate. For words she has no feeling: much that she writes is good despite the clumsiness of its expression, and she is easily deceived by a display of literary fireworks. A delightful and admirable person, an excellent channel for passing on knowledge to others, her individual soul remained, or so it seems to me, a little sketchy.

Perhaps it does not matter. Individuality has perhaps been overstressed in recent years. There is something fresh, something even Christian in the spirit that can cry: "I do love Christmas in an institution. It seems so much gayer and realler than in a house." And yet she herself believed that "no life can be politically satisfactory unless the individual personality also is developed." And surely her novels, her darling writing, suffered

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The editing of these letters leaves much to be desired. There is no index, mistakes occur (such as *palazza vecchia*) which are obviously due to the difficulty of her writing, but ought not to have been passed over, and, out of respect for her memory, the Latin phrases might well have been corrected.

FLORA GRIERSON

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This popular life of General Smuts, by the sustained interest of the story and its lively presentation, is sure to attract a large number of readers. But it shows little understanding of the indispensable South African background. Mr. Armstrong studiously avoids the term Boer, which in 1899 was, he says, used as a term of opprobrium. I have never myself met the Boer who did not glory in the name; and if Boer feelings are to be considered, the correct modern term is Afrikaner—not Afrikander, a much-disliked Anglicism. Incidentally, also, though General Hertzog has three names to choose from, he is known among his intimates, to popular novelists and others who like Christian names, as Barry, not James!

The story follows particularly Smuts's psychological development—a "study in arrogance" for short. The raw, hard, studious youth not only finds himself, but attains robust health in and through the rigours of the Boer War Campaign. So far Mr. Armstrong agrees with Mrs. Millin, but those early years probably need more straightforward treatment. Mr. Armstrong says with justice that British-Dutch misunderstandings are a little like those between near relations. But Mrs. Smuts's family, the Kriges, are described more than once as "opponents, bitter opponents, of the English and of English ways." Before the Jameson Raid Mrs. Smuts's mother, a very gracious lady, was known in certain British circles—with "arrogance" all our own—as Mrs. "English" Krige. The Kriges are, in fact, persons of great energy and ability, some of them no less ardent now than Smuts himself for the reconciliation and co-operation of the two peoples. In Boer War days they were equally zealous and able advocates of what their sympathies led them to espouse as the just cause.

In the next stage Mr. Armstrong and Mrs. Millin cancel out. The latter made Milner the only begetter of the war; now once more it is accepted as due to the crafty calculations of Smuts—Milner's "arrogance" always completely justified. After the war Smuts and Botha were certainly a complementary pair, but Mr. Armstrong makes it too simple, Botha the steady, solid, understanding personality; Smuts nervously irritable, but full of hard drive. I happened once on a domestic party at a critical stage of the Great War where General Botha was as unguarded and indiscreet as it was possible for a Prime Minister to be. He was, in fact, laying a trap for a leading opponent and gloating, like the politician he was, at the prospect of catching him out—which he failed to do. Again, Smuts is described as camping, often alone, at Groot Schuur, in a wilderness of fine rooms and beautiful things he neither understood nor desired, and left in the end with little regret. No doubt. But the founder, Cecil Rhodes, was a dreamer, not unlike Smuts, and a bachelor, and the house is notoriously a severe and inconvenient bachelor establishment.

Some debunking of Smuts's military achievement in East Africa may be not unwarranted, but he was more nearly right about the Peace of Versailles than most of his colleagues and contemporaries. Mr. Armstrong is quick to make play with the contrast between the lofty idealism of Smuts in Europe and the realism of his South African administration, in which he has shown himself ruthless and unimaginative with Indians, natives and strikers. But Mr. Armstrong's own account of 1913–14 and of the greater upheaval of 1922 discusses these episodes as the work of "paid agitators," and describes Johannesburg itself as "an evil place . . .

an ungodly evil city." The Chamber of Mines, it seems, was organised only in 1921, as a counterblast to the agitating Industrial Federation. When inevitable political reaction followed the crushing of the strike—it was after eighteen years in office—this was "the defeat of Smuts personally." "He fell through pride, and because he was as arrogant as a steel blade." Yet we read of his accepting union with Hertzog a few years later as an Act of Renunciation which by 1937, according to the dust cover, "has welded out of the warring peoples a Nation."

The author attempts to explain away Smuts's aloofness as sprung from a youthful sense of inferiority. Among many possible reasons he is perhaps most disliked for a failure to see much that is worth while in the ordinary man's ambitions and recreations. This account exploits the "arrogance" without throwing much new light on the outlook behind it. With an air of letting us into a mystery the author has, in fact, done little more than put on record a faithful account of what the conventional but knowing Englishman has said and thought of Smuts at almost any given point of time in the last forty years.

W. M. MACMILLAN

RALPH FOX

Ralph Fox Memorial Volume. *Lawrence & Wishart.* 3s. 6d.

The sub-title of this book: *A Writer in Arms*, recalls other memorial volumes to men who died to make the world safe for democracy, not knowing they were making it safe for Fascism also. Ralph Fox was just too young for the heroics and the disillusion of that struggle and somehow escaped the pacific idealism and political indifference which seized most of his generation subsequently. It is a bitter reflection that the love of peace in Europe was not able to build an international Army, but that it rose spontaneously from the stimulus of persecution and injustice. While we had a horror of war and spoke in lofty manner of new international armies which would miraculously keep the peace under the Covenant, he had already acquired and trained a social conscience, had foreseen that one international army would beget another and was prepared in mind to join a real and not an ideal International Brigade when the Spanish Civil War exposed to us the true nature of the crisis in Europe. A decision like his has been impossible for most English intellectuals: *On se trompe toujours sur l'Espagne.* Shall we pour ourselves away in a foreign struggle, even for the pleasure of fighting Germans and Italians? And then psychologists had suggested to us that half of our fervour might be due to feelings of guilt and disappointment at not being in the last war. I wonder, for I did not know him, what Ralph Fox thought of this, if he ever thought of it, or whether the lover of China, the biographer of Ghengis Khan and the youth who had gone to the famine area of Russia in 1920, was not under his Marxist straight waistcoat one of our perennial English romantics? The sense of frustration among educated men of the middle classes in our generation—and Fox, I quote Mr. Henry Pollitt's introduction, "came from a comfortable middle-class home. He received the education and upbringing of his class, finishing at Oxford"—has given a new significance to the Rudin type. Was there a strain of Rudin in Ralph Fox? Did Marxism completely exorcise it?

I do not know and his volume does not throw much light on these questions. It dwells rightly on his example, illustrates the manifest superiority of the Communist to-day in action. It describes his work in the Communist party, there are comments on his political writing, particularly on his *Life of Lenin.* There is praise of his neglected and excellent book on Ghengis Khan and of his novels. When one thinks of the work he might have done in China, the suggestion that he wasted his life in Spain has some weight. Representative chapters of his varied work—he was versatile to a fault—are printed, though this is hardly the way to taste an author. From these extracts, he was a better critic than a novelist. There is a warmth and zest about all his writing and if his fire was scattered it was alive. Politics must be praised for giving him principles; but must be blamed for dispersing his energies in the application of them. A craftsman—and Ralph Fox was pre-eminently this—in "mental strife" should not have too many jobs. He was too clever a journalist not to see that Marxism had suddenly filled a void with good, new subjects. But there was a critic in him too, and here, unlike most English Marxists, as his book on the English Novel showed, he really loved literature for its own sake, and had something provocative to say about it. The paradox was that in his own

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writings—as in his life—he turned his eyes abroad in his quest for the epic subject, which nevertheless he told *us* to look for in England—to the heroic clashes where the myriad anomalies of our English classes did not exist and where one could talk more vividly of oppressor and oppressed. Had he lived, he would, it seems, have added something to fable and allegory—a literary medium more likely to wring greatness out of political novelists at the moment than the present proletarian realism. (Good resolution: Read my *Candide* again.) Other English romantics, our Catholics, for example, have turned with nostalgia to pre-reformation times, to contemplate a society more dramatically divided and free of the gradual greyness of the English scene where, as recorded in Mr. George Orwell's latest book, there is more uproar about a Football Pool than about Fascism.

V. S. Pritchett

ARTISTS ARE MORE OR LESS THAN LIONS

Art and Society. By Herbert Read. *Heinemann.* 10*s.*

Roger Fry and Other Essays. By Howard Hannay. *Allen and Unwin.* 6*s.*

The "best society" accepts the artist. It is a bitter paradox that this acceptance has occurred when sensitive artists have removed themselves from contact with life of their day. For even now, while the sensitive are wracking their ids, acquiring specious purism by imitating the effects of functionalism or simply boring themselves and their dealers with unending and unwanted titbits, the practice of the visual arts continues, in the hands of the vulgar and the incompetent, to be a most flourishing profession. If we accept Breughel as the best artist of his time in Brussels (and it would be fatuous to suppose him the Stanley Spencer/Frith of the day), it is perhaps worth noting that, while a small elite admires his colour, his observation and his beautifully direct handling, his paintings were ordered, paid for and have survived for qualities of a more descriptive and literary kind. This same aesthetical oligarchy struggles round the galleries trying to reassure artists (made in their own image) that art is all and that the indifference of the world at large is either immaterial or necessary. But though they try bravely not to care, the fact that their works are unwanted has (in spite of their parrot-boast of unworldliness) undoubtedly a bad effect on sensitive artists. It is because art now has so little relation to society that Mr. Read's subject is of the first importance.

Mr. Read begins with a purpose "to prove that we have reached a certain crisis in our civilisation in which the real nature of art is in danger of being obscured. And Art itself is dying of misuse." The crisis is obvious, and does not require Mr. Read to prove its existence, nor does he in fact attempt to. He begins with a purpose; he ends with the faith, that "the general release from fear and repression . . . that great revolution to which many of us are working . . . will recreate the conditions of great art." In this sentence are crystallised both Mr. Read's idealism and in the undefined (and undefinable) "conditions of great art," his vagueness. The relations between art and society, writes Mr. Read, "in all their ramifications could only be treated in a work of encyclopedic scope." These 270 pages are obviously not enough, and the smallness of the space seems to have encouraged him in sweeping assertions which a more comprehensive survey would prove groundless. Only occasionally does he descend to particularise—here perhaps, he drops a hint that climate is the determining factor in both art and society; here again he waves a hand at a series of fine illustrations:

> Beginning with a bust of Donatello . . . which probably made use of a death mask, we observe the efforts of a number of painters, culminating in Raphael, to obtain a direct impression of spatial reality and plastic modelling (the illusion of a three dimensional continuum) followed by the inevitable abuse of this power in the interests of social vanity and pride; the gradual return during the nineteenth century to directness and honesty (Degas, Renoir, Cézanne) and then the complete abandonment of the representational motive, rediscovery of the free imaginative scope of art.

Even if this commentary is not (as I think it) positively misleading, it has a moral tinge that does not become the Mr. Read who writes of the misuse of art, "It is a question of forcing art into false moral issues." In the same tone Mr. Read dismisses the last two centuries, "the decline of art in the last two hundred years has been proportional to the rise of Capitalism." If this bold dismissal of the art of nineteenth-century France requires no comment, it is at least worthy of note that Mr. Read occupies more than a third of his space with excursions in speculative anthropology and with inchoate psychological generalisation. His notion that the artist is a neurotic "who is frustrated because of his lack of physical strength and personal charm," if it does not earn reproof from the analysts, should make a few enemies among artists. While the leaky sophisms with which he presents his idea that the artist is automatically opposed to society, that art is the antithesis of realism (again undefined) and that both are dependent on a so-called "elite"—a sort of B.B.C. culture committee—could be popular only with the "elite" in question. The best chapter is an account of fallacies in the superficial application of Socialist Realism as preached in the U.S.S.R., but there is too little in this vein. Mr. Read is disinclined to commit himself and scatters his pages with reference and quotation, but all the same he gives the game away. His real reason for attempting this survey is to justify historically the faith he has in certain contemporary movements. Alas the contradictions invalidate the justification. Mr. Read is a better poet than partisan. There are a hundred reproductions, mostly well chosen and all magnificently produced. For the sake of these the whole book is printed on shiny paper.

The great difference between Mr. Read and Mr. Hannay is in method. Where Mr. Read starts from hypothesis and ends in the air, Mr. Hannay, sticking a little pedantically to the facts as he sees them, ends with plain common sense. The great difference between Mr. Hannay and Mr. Roger Fry (or Mr. Berenson for that matter) is that where Mr. Fry was a critic of art, Mr. Hannay is a critic of critics. He has the debunker's interest in other people's reactions, a good nose for an unwarranted assumption and a healthy determination to let nothing pass that does not make sense. Mr. Hannay's difficulty is not so much the debunking of ideas, as the setting up of ideas to debunk. And the question arises as to whether Mr. Hannay is really discussing another critic's theory, or whether he is not setting up a subjective interpretation of his own. So that when he is pointing to judgments that surpass a Puritan aesthetic in Roger Fry, or to contradictory interpretations of "tactile values in Mr. Berenson, he

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is not so much showing that these gentlemen are limited critics as that his idea of them as limited critics is incorrect. And when he is examining the failure of what he calls "Cubist" art or the ambiguities in the contemporary critic's use of "imagination," he has to propound a theory for the one and a meaning for the other before he can either destroy or add to them. What he deduces from his arguments is not more complex than Roger Fry's "two elements in a work of art . . . the external situation and the reaction to it of the artist's whole nature," or Mr. Read's "art is a convincing representation of the totality of experience." In effect his message is that a man's reactions to works of art cannot be labelled aesthetic, moral, and so on, and kept apart. Such conclusions are both fundamental and commonplace. The boring thing about basic truths is their truism. Generalisations tend to be as dull as they are inaccurate. Though Mr. Hannay is more inclined to particularise than Mr. Read, his subject is one stage farther from experience. It is perhaps amusing to see that the "chewing over of other men's ideas" and "writing on things that all intelligent people know already and stupid people aren't interested in" that Tchekov so grumbled about in *Uncle Vanya*, still goes on.

GRAHAM BELL

MASKS

Masks of the World. By JOSEPH GREGOR. *Batsford.* 126*s.*

This handsome volume must interest alike the aesthete, the anthropologist and the psychologist. Herr Gregor, who is Director of the Theatrical Art Section in the Vienna National Library, has collected 255 illustrations of masks from every part of the world; and in his introduction he discusses the various functions of the mask. It has been very widely used in religion, both to inspire terror and to express identification with a totem animal, and from this developed, alike in Greece and in the Far East, its use in the theatre. Finally, there is its use in the streets in carnival-time as a disguise convenient especially to the licentious. (Incidentally no one who has lived in Venice can fail to understand why in that city masks were especially popular. It is impossible there to escape from too frequent meetings with one's least engaging acquaintances; gambling now has been re-established at the Ridotto; would not a revival of the mask be a considerably greater convenience for the visitor?) The aesthete will notice the superiority of the masks from the West Coast of Africa; the anthropologist will be struck by the similarity between certain types of ritual mask in every part of the world; and the psychologist will notice that the vast majority of the masks are effectively terrifying. Plate 58, for instance, shows a Canadian Indian mask which is curiously like Hitler. (It was Mr. Leonard Woolf who first pointed out the similarity between savage masks and the dictators' countenances.) Even more alarming is the Shaman mask of the Koskoquins—which has the crazy disorganised quality so patiently pursued by the Surrealists. Herr Gregor has included gargoyles and sculptures of the head which are not true masks, but which illuminate the variety of treatment employed by artists to express this most expressive part of the human frame. This book is a fascinating and disquieting comment upon the blackness of the human heart. For in these masks are released from the unconscious the most anti-social impulses. Superstition is here manifested in all its virulence, and tyranny in all its sadism. The illustrations are admirably reproduced, many of them in colour. And the only complaint which must be made is against a matter of minor carelessness: some of the German captions have been incompetently translated.

R. M.

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A RETROSPECTIVE LIST

FOR the next fortnight or so, until the bunting comes down, there will be very few books published. Publishers, like everyone else, will be busy cashing in on the Coronation. It seems a suitable moment to remind those whose interests are not exclusively loyal of the books which have already appeared in 1937. A dozen perhaps are outstanding:

The Amberley Papers, edited by Bertrand and Patricia Russell (Hogarth £2 2*s.*).
Letters of Fanny Brawn to Fanny Keats, edited by Frederick Edgcumbe (Oxford, 10*s.* 6*d.*).
Notebooks and Papers of Gerard Manley Hopkins, edited by Humphry House (Oxford, 25*s.*).
Letters of Lenin (Chapman and Hall, 15*s.*).
Things Past Redress, by Augustine Birrell (Faber, 15*s.*).
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Grey of Fallodon, by G. M. Trevelyan (Longmans, 16*s.*).
Slang Dictionary, by Eric Partridge (Routledge, 42*s.*).
London the Unique City, by S. E. Rasmussen (Cape, 15*s.*).
Forward from Liberalism, by Stephen Spender (Gollancz, 7*s.* 6*d.*).
Cocteau's, The Infernal Machine, translated by Carl Wildman (Oxford, 7*s.* 6*d.*).
The Years, a novel by Virginia Woolf (Hogarth Press, 8*s.* 6*d.*).

Among other books which received special praise in THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION were:

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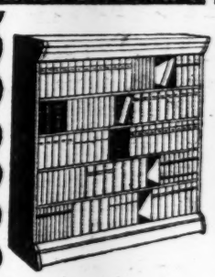

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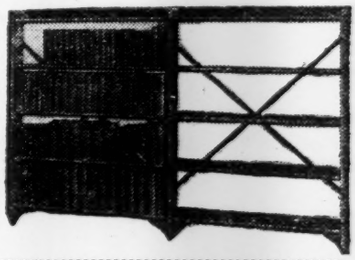

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RUSSIA IN UNIFORM

Back from the U.S.S.R. By ANDRÉ GIDE. *Secker and Warburg. 2s. 6d.*

Not long ago I asked one of the ablest and most devoted of British Communists whether he and his friends cared about individual liberty. "Some of us bourgeois," I said, "realise that the freedom we now have means little to the very poor and that one of the main reasons for striving to maintain our existing liberties is that the struggle for Socialism can only be effectively conducted in countries where there is civil liberty. But if Communism triumphs will you still be interested in individual freedom? May not the dictatorship of the proletariat mean the rule of a bureaucracy which cares nothing for liberty, nothing, for instance, for the freedom of the mind?" My friend replied that Communists did care for liberty and individual development and that the danger that the State would not "wither away" and that the new bureaucracy might be difficult to dislodge was real. "It will be our duty in that case," he said, "to criticise Communism and to fight for liberty within the structure of the new social order."

André Gide, probably the most distinguished man of letters in France and, until this book was published, the brightest star in the Communist firmament, last year visited the U.S.S.R. and decided that the time had come for just that kind of criticism which my Communist friend saw might someday become necessary. His book is a record of disappointment; it is never for a moment a repudiation of Socialism or an attack on the U.S.S.R. It is a book written in sorrow and sincerity. The great achievements of Russia are praised and almost taken for granted. There are passages of great beauty, which bitter critics of the Left and exultant propagandists of the Right have alike overlooked, passages in which Gide expresses his joy in discovering men and women set free from an ancient tyranny and co-operating in a fruitful communal life. But the main burden of his book is disappointment. He realises that to express it is for the moment to please his enemies and antagonise his friends. He writes:

> . . . and this would have prevented me from publishing it, from writing it even, were not my convictions still firm and unshaken that, on the one hand, the Soviet Union will end by triumphing over the serious errors that I point out, on the other, and this is more important, that the particular errors of one country cannot suffice to compromise a cause which is international and universal.

In estimating the force of his criticism, two things about Gide should be remembered. He is an artist and acutely sensitive to the ugliness and shoddiness which appear to be the inevitable products of the early stages of mass production whether under capitalist or Socialist direction. He does not make much of this criticism. He realises that the necessity in Russia to-day is quantity and that quality must be a secondary consideration. But it is clear that he was constantly oppressed by ugliness and that as this was his first visit to Russia he lacked that standard of comparison with Tsarist Russia or with the U.S.S.R. a few years ago which enables some other sensitive people to make due allowance for present deficiencies. Secondly, it is clear that Gide went to Russia expecting too much:

> Who shall say what the Soviet Union has been to us? More than a chosen land—an example, a guide . . . a land existed where Utopia was in process of becoming reality . . . .

To have invested so much moral capital in any human undertaking was to invite disaster. We must be grateful that Gide, who made the same mistake in his distant view of Russia that Wordsworth and Southey made in the early days of the French Revolution has not, like them, become bitter in his disillusionment and turned away with a curse on his lips to a sour acceptance of things as they are.

Expecting Utopia in the making, Gide was somewhat naively disappointed to find so much poverty still in Russia. He regrets the many concessions that Soviet Communism has made to its enemies and dislikes, as many Communists do, the return of dreary laws which had always been denounced as bourgeois—the severe penalties, for instance, against abortion and homosexuality. He fears the result of retrogressive steps due, as he says, to fear of Germany—the progressive restoration of private property and of inheritance, and the alarming growth of economic inequality. The goal of Socialism itself "may be compromised by these successive concessions." He sees, though he does not clearly formulate, what I regard as the greatest menace of all to Socialism in Russia, the coincidence of economic advantage and political power, the danger that the ruling bureaucracy will have not only a political but also an economic interest in maintaining their position. But it was not this fear of a new class system in his beloved Socialist State that most worried Gide. His deepest concern was aroused by the uniformity of thought and the immense self-complacency which are the result of continuous propaganda unchecked by any standard of comparison or even knowledge of what is happening in other countries.

There is nothing new in the discovery that thought is regimented in the U.S.S.R. It was silly to expect to find it free. But some of the conversations Gide records—he wrote them down verbatim immediately on their occurrence—are really terrifying. The incident of the telegram, when he was not allowed to wire to Stalin without putting after his name one of a stock set of eulogistic phrases, could be passed by with a smile as a comic example of bureaucratic zeal. But the numerous examples of ignorant complacency are more serious. Economic self-sufficiency is quite defensible in a vast country like the U.S.S.R. But psychological self-sufficiency has devastating results and one must remember that an entire generation have grown up in the U.S.S.R. which has never seen the rest of the world or learnt anything of it except through the official sources of propaganda. In Russia it is commonly believed that "everybody abroad and in every department is far less prosperous than in the U.S.S.R. . . . Hence a kind of superiority complex." What would one say to the student who explained that it was no longer necessary for Russians to know a foreign language because "a few years ago Germany and the United States still had something to teach us on a few points. But now we have nothing more to learn from foreigners, so why should we speak their language"? And worse still, what would one say when the student corrected himself and said: "I understand—we all understand to-day—that such an argument is absurd. A foreign language, when it no longer serves for learning, may still serve for teaching." The children could not believe that Paris had a tube or that any Russian film was ever seen in a capitalist country; they had been taught that apart from a few capitalists everyone was in desperate poverty in every capitalist country. They wanted no information. "*Pravda*," they said, "gives us sufficient information about everything."

Gide concluded that "in the U.S.S.R. everybody knows beforehand, once and for all, that on any and every subject there can only be one opinion." He gives the example of a conversation with a Soviet artist with whom he discussed the vital problem of whether art can remain genuinely alive if it is expected always to approve and is deprived of the impulse of revolt. Talking in a restaurant, the artist loudly condemned Gide's question as bourgeois; "but a few moments later he came to my room and in a low voice this time, 'Of course,' he said, 'you were perfectly right . . . but there were people listening to us just now . . . and I have an exhibition opening very soon.'" Such incidents so wrought on Gide that he goes so far as to say: "I doubt whether in any other country in the world, even Hitler's Germany, thought be less free, more bowed down, more fearful (terrorised), more vassalised." And in reply to those who say that "criticism" is welcomed in the U.S.S.R. he says regretfully that wherever he has tested it he finds that "criticism" to-day means nothing more than discussion about whether a particular idea or action is in accordance with the party line. The smallest protest "is liable to the severest penalties, and in fact is immediately stifled."

Gide, an artist and individualist, may be accused of exaggeration. There is, after all, a wonderfully adventurous spirit in science in Russia and there are hundreds of people painting pictures and writing books who would never have had the chance to develop creative gifts in any other country. I wish Gide had made a fuller examination of this artistic output. But I doubt if any reply can be built up on these lines against his general criticism of the dictatorship of thought, the rigorous uniformity of mental direction imposed on all citizens, including the artist. Most Communists will admit this, and say that with Trotskyites plotting and capitalist Powers hungrily waiting to destroy, repression of dangerous thoughts is necessary, that there is still too much risk in permitting heterodoxy.

The question arises whether one reason for the apparently serious dimensions of Trotskyite plotting within the Soviet Union to-day is not that the dictatorship confuses honest criticism with wrecking and often prevents loyal servants of the revolution contributing their best to the progress of the U.S.S.R. No one can contribute his best who is obliged always to conform. To confuse criticism with anti-social conduct is to invite the critic, if he is a man of character, to turn to courses

which are really anti-social. Moreover, Russia to-day is strong. The revolution has twenty years of history behind it and the enthusiastic support, we are assured, of the vast majority of people and in particular of the younger generation. The old bourgeoisie has utterly disappeared and, it is to be noticed, the "counter-revolutionaries" of to-day are those who wish continually to push forward towards Socialism, not those who favour concessions to capitalism. The time, one would have thought, has arrived for showing trust in popular support and for granting freedom to intellectual impulses which can contribute far more than they now do to Russia's greatness and from which all progress that is more than material must spring.

It is an error to believe that repression of thought and a dead level of opinion are necessities of Socialism. That is what our enemies have always said and it need not be true. We have always realised that danger and have watched the development of Russia during recent years with the eager hope that as the U.S.S.R. became strong enough to meet her external enemies and economically more stable and more prosperous we should see at least the beginnings of that withering away of the State which we had been promised. Instead, at least since the murder of Kirov, the U.S.S.R. seems to be moving not towards more Socialism and more freedom, but towards more uniformity and less Socialism. Much may be justified by necessity. Socialists abroad are prepared to wait patiently and hopefully. But if the direction is wrong, it is our duty, as it was Gide's, to raise doubts, and we have the right to expect more than the conventional abuse in reply. In France, I am told, Gide's book has an immense sale and is being seriously read by progressive people of all shades of thought. I hope that the same may be true of England, even though Gide's name is known so much less than it should be in this country. In Russia itself, where one would think that at first sight the book would do most good, no one, I suppose, will have the opportunity of reading it, though everyone has seen denunciations of Gide's "treachery" in the Moscow press. More serious still is the thought that if Gide's picture is true, very few people in Russia, if the book were placed in their hands, would even understand the meaning of many of his criticisms.

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There are no masterpieces here, there are no exceptional characters nor are there any absorbing situations. Indeed, there seems to be a really nice opportunity for a few epigrams about the condition of the novel and week-ends ruined by reviewing them. Good criticism comes only from those who read for pleasure. Looking back upon this batch, failing to remember the characters or stories clearly, I realise there was the illusion of having been abroad and that this was pleasurable. America, the Greek Islands, India and Russia—yes, these writers had seen the world. Beginning with India, Mr. Elwin's Gonds were a fresh and curious experience. They are a remnant of primitive people who fled to the Maikal hills from the Moghul invasion and there, naked, leprous and syphilitic, familiar with magic and spirits, they love, gossip, cast spells and spin out their startling and interminable folklore in an Arcadia twice removed from civilisation. Mr. Elwin has lived among these people and understands them very well. He listened to their tales, for they live on that level where the agonies of disease or the mysteries of fate do not turn the mind to a search for knowledge but to the making of explanatory and consolatory stories. Knowledge being unknown—these people are not generally aware that leprosy is contagious—they are almost without morbidity. It is the coming of this knowledge to Gamira, the lover of Phalmut "the girl of furious gold," which makes tragedy break upon Mr. Elwin's tale. His moral seems to be: the wisdom of ignorance. Without Phalmut the book would still have been interesting. She is, I thought, romanticised. I am not sure that Mr. Elwin would not have done better to remain a traveller and anthropologist, for his shadow falls disconcertingly upon Phalmut. Unabashed, gay and candidly objective as he is about the tribe, its amorous young women and garrulous old men squatting by their mud huts, he has a sentence or two about Phalmut which is in a convention that must have been foreign to her:

> But it was not her style to share her man with another girl; romance was a necessity for her; unless she had everything, what use in having anything at all.

Well, anthropology has taught us that love in the Maikal hills is very much the same as it is in Brixton and that the witch doctors of the latter place wear surplices. We know "it's the same the whole world over," and that the outstanding quality of the eternal triangle is that it is eternal, and that Phalmut might easily give Gamira up as though she had been reading Mr. Bertrand Russell, but still had her pride. The doubt arises from the terms in which Mr. Elwin renders this emotion. For the novelist writing about races foreign to him the golden rule is the Bank of England's: Never explain, never apologise. Mr. Elwin admirably avoids the latter; it is the romantic Phalmut who seduces him from time to time, I feel, into the former error. But *Phalmut of the Hills* is an original book.

We move from a primitive to a persecuted people in Mr. Blumenfeld's *Phineas Kahn*. They are Russian Jews on the Galician border and in the third generation the son, Phineas, migrates to the East End of London. The time is the beginning of the century. In Russia there were brutality, persecution, hunger and the ghetto; but in London, where life was outwardly more tolerant and better and the immigrant could see a chance for his children, there was the grey slavery of the sweat-shop tailors. Medieval tyranny had been exchanged for industrial tyranny. Between Russia and London there was one short happy interlude in Vienna where Phineas found a chance for his musical gift; and even in the Russian army he had been encouraged to play the euphonium! London closed down such adventures of the spirit. Saddled with an only too fertile wife—an hereditary affliction in his family—Phineas slaved at the machine, making caps for Hottentots. I thought Mr. Blumenfeld's *Jew Boy* a better book. The present one is an example of how the Jewish imagination is both inspired and leadened by its overwhelming historical sense. This imagination lisps in chronicles, and so turns the novel into a featureless monody of events. As the generations close up on them the characters become anonymous and woe is a habit. One has the impression of reading an auto-

biography or a family history which assumes that you already know the people and wish merely to have now the main facts of their lives. When, for example, Phineas goes to the States, it is all very cursorily described. There are good flashes, of course: Phineas and his wife arriving penniless and starving at Liverpool Street and gazing with stupefaction when someone offers them food, is one. His fate is real, too, but the book remains a document rather than a novel. It is a document of some interest.

Mr. North shows the melting pot at closer quarters. His is a novel about a small town in America's two years of war and is, under its whimsicalities, an intelligent plea for the heroism of pacifism. There is a German colony in the town, and hence the conflict, the chief figure in which is a harmless and decent old German butcher. He has a fanciful daughter—very neatly drawn. Supporting him are Early Ann, a girl off a farm married to a man at the front, and Chris, the son of the local boss and Hun-baiter. Prostitutes, Methodists, a pair of disillusioned journalists, the whole small town boiling are here, and Mr. North is a kindly and shrewd sketcher of character. He dapples his pages with a slightly playful benevolence and that peculiar tenderness Americans have; sometimes tiresome and often a mannerism. The German butcher's suicide is a shade too dainty for my taste. It has often been observed that America's puritanism has been so thoroughly canalised in the direction of success, that there has appeared a leniency and sentimentality about misdemeanour which would shatter an English town. Mr. North can put a Brailsford Junction wife to bed with her lover with an almost charming primness and one would not dream of breathing the word adultery, for is she not having a brave struggle making good with her shop? And this is not the new morality by Jurgen out of Anatole France, but the Washington Irving *de nos jours*.

Mr. Burnett's is skilful also. This book is a model of readability, a story told with plenty of talk and put together with the economy and good cutting of a businesslike film. Here are six days in the life of a Governor who is seeking re-election in Ohio, during the slump. A dullish, sound man of vague liberal views but conservative impulses, he is opposed by a radical demagogue. The honest Governor quite dishonestly double-crosses the demagogue by raising a martial law scare. There are other things on his mind, too. He is a widower and is half-engaged to a Europeanised neurotic who has a gold-digging foreigner in tow—the typical wicked foreigner of the *Saturday Evening Post* American's imagination; and, hesitant as usual, the tired Governor finds himself liking the way a cute little girl from the local hotel, called Kitten, curls up on his knee and nuzzles him. There is the usual trouble with son and daughter and the usual back-chat and drinks with the party hacks and reporters. It sounds conventional enough, sentimental and a little silly, but Mr. Burnett is one of those hard-headed writers who never makes a fool of himself with his characters and knows exactly when to be hard-boiled. He reports the Governor and everyone else sympathetically; the tough and sentimental Kitten is Emma Haig straight out of *The Girl Friend*; and the more you like the Governor the more disastrous to Ohio, you feel, his victory will be. And you have the pleasant feeling of not knowing on which side of the fence Mr. Burnett is sitting. The balancing trick could not be more adroitly performed. Mr. Burnett has cut out the literature and it should be a lesson to our wordier popular novelists.

The final journey is to one of the Greek Islands, an island whose prevailing wind blows, I fear, barren leaves from Nepenthe. There is the standard precipitous cliff. But the wind has sharpened since the Calabrian days. No bland and deteriorating bishop comes over from the mainland, but an ex-schoolmaster of quietest aspirations, and the other English on the island are nervy, argumentative and reminiscent. The cruelty of life has got into them like sand into a thermos flask. Separate narratives take back the talk to England. Walsh is mourning the dead and thinking with horror of the vicar's bedroom at home; Francis recalls the country life of the English middle classes and compares it (unfavourably) with starvation and disillusion in Millman Street and being seduced in order to sell her textile designs. In the twenties you lost your virginity but kept your integrity; in the thirties you lose your integrity but preserve your—what is it?—ideology? The best thing is the macabre account of the embalming of a prostitute. Horror is Mr. Norden's strong point. With the difficult poets come the difficult novelists; not the old *Work in Progress* kind of difficulty but a lucid style in search of a subject. Mr. North is the most intellectual of these novelists and, I should say, the youngest; the most serious but the least profound; the least readable but the most promising. In a cold, spiteful way his "waste land" narratives, with all their *voulu* disillusion, are not at all bad.

V. S. PRITCHETT

AFRICA, ETC.

White African. By L. S. B. LEAKEY. *Hodder and Stoughton.* 15*s.*

Restless Jungle. By MARY AKELEY. *Harrap.* 10*s.* 6*d*

Hunting Beasts and Men. By P. H. COMBE. *Hale.* 12*s.* 6*d.*

Out of Africa. By F. G. CARNOCHAN and H. C. ADAMSON *Cassell.* 10*s.* 6*d.*

Running the Gauntlet. By GEORGE MOSSOP. *Nelson.* 8*s.* 6*d.*

Soldiering with a Stethoscope. By COLONEL N. J. C. RUTHERFORD. *Stanley Paul.* 12*s.* 6*d.*

This Life I've Loved. By ISOBEL FIELD. *Michael Joseph.* 15*s.*

There is always something stale out of Africa might serve as a motto for most of these books. They belong to the class which has always baffled me, the ten to fifteen shilling group of autobiographies written by people who do not know how to write—and for whom? Who will read these books? Who will pay for them? The first and the last are worth taking out of the library, if the subjects appeal to you. The rest form part of the mysteries of publishing. They are written. They appear. They cost what they do. Some will end up very much cheaper on railway bookstalls. Others are certain to be read at any rate by a few friends or colleagues, mentioned with pride by relations. Next autumn the publishers will hand out some more.

White African is the story of a young man with a vocation. The son of a Nairobi missionary, Mr. Leakey was brought up among the Kikuyu and became practically one of them. He went home to an uncongenial public school with a collection of obsidian prehistoric implements, and decided to go to Cambridge and read Anthropology. He had only sixty pounds, but from the first St. John's College realised they were dealing with a prodigy, and his record is an unbroken list of grants and scholarships

Elizabeth Fry

By JANET WHITNEY. *Illustrated.* 12/6 *net*

Not for twenty years has there been a biography of the great Quaker woman, who, in the early 19th century, reformed the bestial conditions in Newgate Prison and on the ships transporting women convicts to Australia, besides being an educational pioneer. Newly discovered letters and family papers have shed fresh light on her life and work. Mrs. Whitney, herself a prominent English Quaker, has had access to much unpublished material, and the story of Elizabeth Fry's life, first in Norfolk and then in London, is finely told.

Paintings of the Royal Collection

By ROY BISHOP. *Illustrated.* 12/6 *net*

Aided by 65 reproductions of pictures, all of which have been specially photographed for this volume, Mr. Bishop describes the paintings in Buckingham Palace, Windsor Castle, Hampton Court Palace, Holyroodhouse, and Balmoral. Exceptional facilities were granted to him for this work by gracious permission of the King.

HARRAP

182 High Holborn, London, W.C.1

helped out by his own industry, whether lecturing, or selling ebony walking-sticks to the Cambridge tailors in return for clothing. He took first in the Modern Language Tripos, offering French and Kikuyu. To find a second examiner in the latter the authorities had to appoint his own pupil! A kick on the head prevented him from working for a year, which he spent on an archaeological expedition in Kenya; after that he returned, took his first in anthropology and a fellowship, and was soon leading expeditions of his own. His book is quite interesting, the record of an absolutely effortless rise to fame of a born archaeologist aided by a suitable environment (imagine Malinovski being born on a Trobriand island) and hindered only by lack of money, which a grateful university almost immediately supplied. His story puts English education in a very good light, for no one could have been prompter than the authorities of St. John's to recognise the nature of their prodigy. It is obvious that Dr. Leakey is one of the fortunate people of the earth to-day, a person whose work, whose ambitions, whose interests all completely coincide; his mission is to dig and to examine what he finds, and there are the caves where he played as a boy to be explored, his faithful Kikuyu to explore them, societies to finance his discoveries, and a world to honour them. Read him and envy!

Restless Jungle is a chatty account of animal life in such places as the Kruger National Park and South Africa proper. There is not much interesting material in this, unless you happen to be an animal-photographer yourself. The writer's husband was also a naturalist and explorer. The photographs are excellent.

Hunting Beasts and Men is an amiable kind of book by a go-anywhere, do-anything kind of young man. One is not surprised to find him passing through Great Portland Street. His account of his irresponsible "bagging" of the very rare mountain zebra, whose imminent extinction the author of *Restless Jungle* so deplores, is typical of a sportsmanlike Englishman. "Hunting, and contact with the cheery childish niggers, had brought me a lot of quiet happiness," he writes; one wonders how much he brought to the unfortunate animals who let him get near or the men who came up against the Rhodesian Mounted Police, where he found his vocation. A typical self-portrait of the more dangerous type of "cheery soul," one of Nature's Black-and-Tans.

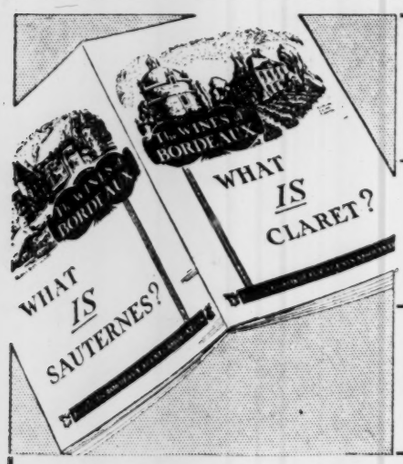
Out of Africa is a superior book, a kind of narrative-novel compiled from the talk of an old medicine man, Kalola, who was once the ruler of the vast tribes of the Nyamwesi, and who was present at the meeting of Stanley and Livingstone. It contains very full accounts of their rites and initiations, and of the old slave and ivory journeys of the Arabs:

> Kalola's declining years were tragic years. Here was a man who had led a full and active life, been of commanding importance, and, had conditions remained static, would have increased steadily in influence as he grew older. Suddenly, at the height of his powers, came the white invader. So, through an influence which he could neither control nor understand, Kalola saw himself slowly driven into hiding, unable to use his remarkable ability in tribe craft, until he became, as he thought, a rather useless old man.

The authors of *Running the Gauntlet* and *Soldiering with a Stethoscope* spent much of their time in Africa. The former fought at Majuba, knew the Prince Imperial and bears out Mrs. Akeley's assertion that no one who has seen it can forget the look in the eyes of a dying giraffe. *This Life I've Loved* contains a great deal about Stevenson and the South Seas and is fairly entertaining.

Behind these books, besides the depression of seeing so much labour of creation and production by author, printer and publisher achieve so little, is an even gloomier shadow. That of the Dark Continent itself. The medical officer, the soldier, the policeman, the anthropologists, the big game hunters all batten on it and with what result? The black mamba makes a pass at one and all, but none of them get actually bitten, and the animal and native alike retreat before them. It is impossible to read all these books and not feel a good deal of the futility of colonisation. The animals swarm in herds, the natives live subject to great injustice and cruel tabus, but with a vigorous life of their own, a niche in history. The white man comes. The animals die out except the few shut up in parks, the natives enjoy medicine, justice, good roads and forced labour, but the life supply of dignity and independence on which they flourished is turned off at the main. And the exploiters have so little to show for it, a pension and a villa for the civil servant, a few stuffed heads for the hunter; only the anthropologists, who do least harm, reap any permanent good. They say herds of elephants die when an aeroplane flies too low over them, it seems true of continents as well.

CYRIL CONNOLLY



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SCIENCE AND RELIGION

Systems of Meditation in Religion. By W. LOFTUS HARE. *Philip Allan.* 8*s.* 6*d.*

This generation is tired of the question, Can Religion be reconciled with Science? The dispute has broken up and the two disputants have gone their ways. The mechanist has decided that Religion is untrue, because it is based on a disproved cosmology. The traditionalist maintains that only acceptance of his cosmo-historical premises can lead to the religious life and that that life is of supreme value. Hence the end of the discussion with both sides unmoved. The mechanist still feels free to call the traditionalist a liar because his objections have not been met, his charge that the traditional premise is wrong. He accuses the traditionalist of *suggestio falsi*. Because the mechanist will not face the results which religion can produce, the traditionalist remains convinced that he is just as free to call his opponent a liar because of *suppressio veri*.

That deadlock reached, the original question falls. To outsiders it looks as though it must have been one of those many questions which are so ill put as to yield no answer. Therefore to-day there is an attempt to restate it in some such form as, Can Religion be made a Science? To this the traditionalist would reply, The science of religion already exists: it is theology. The mechanist counters: that is only returning to the old controversy; theology is the definition of that anthropomorphism which science has disproved; theology and science cannot be reconciled. The outsider can however here intervene. It is clear that religion is not theology. Though up to the present theology has almost always been precipitated by religion, theology is the shell, the letter—religion the life, the spirit.

Yet how make a science of a spirit? Is there any way of judging a spirit except by its shell? Here a change in science itself gives some hope of escape out of that vicious circle which began to spin when the Tao Tê Ching ruled, "Those who know don't say and those who say don't know"; religion is essentially an art and the truly religious are as poets, born not made. Science is increasingly confining itself to study of function and leaving

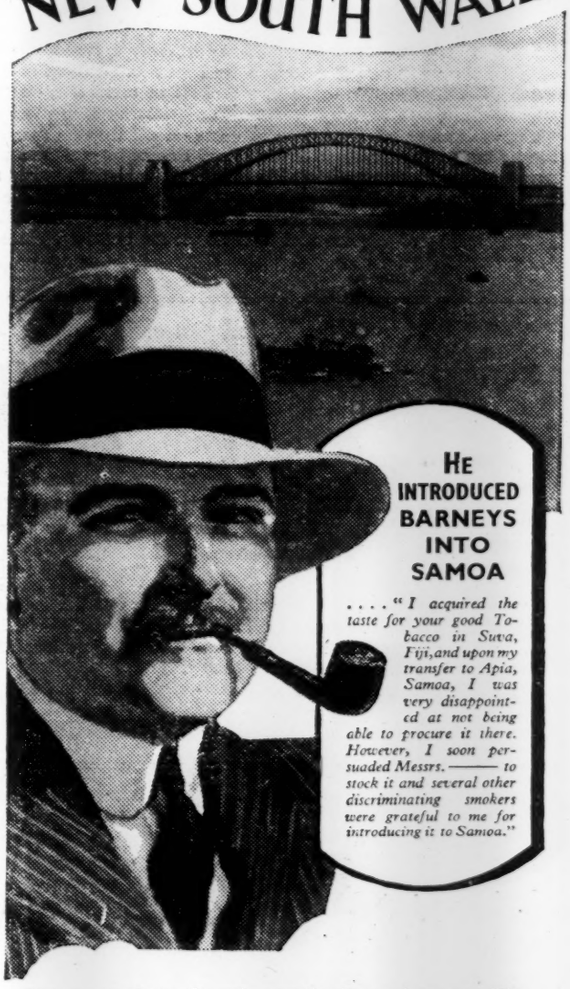
a i le attempts to define entity. Religion might therefore be so approached in a really scientific frame of mind and might show itself to be a subject naturally suited to scientific investigation. Leaving aside its attempted definitions of entities it could be considered as a function of the mind following a certain pattern and leading to certain resultants. This is what Mr. Loftus Hare has attempted in his book. He believes he has defined the essential function in religion. This he names Meditation. Functional words must always be vague, especially in the vocabulary of a people untrained to define mental states. Contemplation is probably a somewhat better word. But, as we have already had to take the word *mana* from the Polynesians we ought probably to adopt the far more necessary word *Jhana* from Pali. Jhana is a dynamic realisation of complete integration, by careful training in concentration. It combines that alert passivity (which Roger Fry used to say was the attitude most needed by the art lover) with the naturalist's intense but uninterfering attention and the great humanist's realisation of his kinship with all life. Mr. Hare points out how this method has emerged out of all the elder religious practices. Beginning with prayer with requests to an outer power to alter circumstances, man from China to Peru has learnt to train himself in this act of acceptance and union. Failure has been constant and failure as in all evolution means a precipitate collapse of spirit into form, into ritual and theology. Nor is that all. If there is to be progress, not only must theology be avoided. Negatives and Protestantism are not enough. As man's mind grows in definiteness it must avoid the "projective" mistake of theology but, on the other hand, it must make its practices conscious and clear. Otherwise they become vague, ineffective and unreal. Hence, if man avoids a theology—a premature and paralysing definition of entity—he must have a psychology, a praxis, a clearly known rule of function, a way of mind training. Mr. Hare illustrates from such orthodox saints as Albert the Great and such condemned heretics as Molinos, how all advanced practitioners have known, at least intuitively, what was essential, what inessential, what was spirit and what the theological crust gathering on the spirit. Danger has lain in the fact that they seldom made their intuition explicit. It is hard for artists to be scientists, yet that is what is demanded of these advanced psychologists to-day. Their moral capital and their discoveries must not be at the disposal of reaction. Granted that certain practices can make men masters of themselves and friends of mankind here is the sanction without which Liberalism has been failing and lacking which all reform has to fall back on coercion. Hence, if a science of religion is possible it is of active concern to all—never more than to-day when the greater the assurance that one is right the stronger the belief that the destruction of all who disagree is the only way and the right way. Mr. Hare has then written a stimulating study. It seems best in its survey of the Neo-Platonist Christian and the Vedantic Buddhist evolution from theology to psychology. He apparently has not read Waley's authoritative study of the Tao Te Ching and so misdates "Lao-Tzu." Zen—a vitally important experiment—is neglected and the studies now made on religious evolution in Polynesia and among the Amerind Indians are unmentioned. Nevertheless, here are certain important lines of man's psychological evolution clearly elucidated and illustrated. The book is valuable not merely in itself, but in that it will give rise to others until we have at last a science of the growing edge of the human mind, of how that process can be consciously advanced and so social life be given at last its inherent sanction. GERALD HEARD

SHORTER NOTICES

My Flying Life: An Authentic Biography Prepared under the Personal Supervision of and from the Diaries and Papers of the late Sir Charles Kingsford-Smith. *Melrose.* 16s.

This biography of Kingsford-Smith was compiled by Mr. Geoffrey Rawson from information given him from time to time by the famous airman. The penultimate chapter was completed when he started on that last flight from which he did not return, so that the book ends with the handing over of the "Southern Cross," the "Old Bus" that had served him so well, to the Commonwealth Government. So well has Mr. Rawson related the stories of Kingsford-Smith's great flights as he heard them from the great flier's own lips that the book reads like an autobiography. There is a gusto in the telling, an enthusiasm, that make it difficult to remember that any hand but his has been concerned in the writing of these memoirs. Here, from the beginning when Kingsford-Smith left the Australian forces in France to join the R.A.F.,

FROM A SMOKER IN NEW SOUTH WALES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to his preparations for the last fatal flight, we see him taking to the air as his true element, and foreshadowing in his enjoyment of flight the triumphs to come. Neither undeserved failures nor the financial embarrassment that pursued him damped his ardour for the game.

From a Surgeon's Journal. 1915-1918. By HARVEY CUSHING. *Constable.* 18s.

Professor Cushing, the eminent American brain specialist and biographer of Sir William Osler, served with many of the medical contingents during the war, and, even during offensives, when he was operating for sixteen hours at a stretch, he kept a day-to-day record. This book of some five hundred pages consists of extracts from that monumental diary, and, although it will appeal primarily to members of his own profession, there is much in it, notes on the men he met and the men he served and on life in England and France in war time, that will appeal to the general reader. Here at any rate is modern war in the raw, and those who contemplate another will do well to assimilate its message, for in the next the horrors here recorded will be multiplied, while the bungling of commanders will no doubt out-Passchendaele Passchendaele.

Week-end Competitions

No. 372

Set by Frederick Laws

A first prize of Two Guineas and a second of Half a Guinea are offered for the best dance lyrics containing the line "I'm a White-livered Red with the Blues." Entries should be topical but need not necessarily be croonable.

RULES—

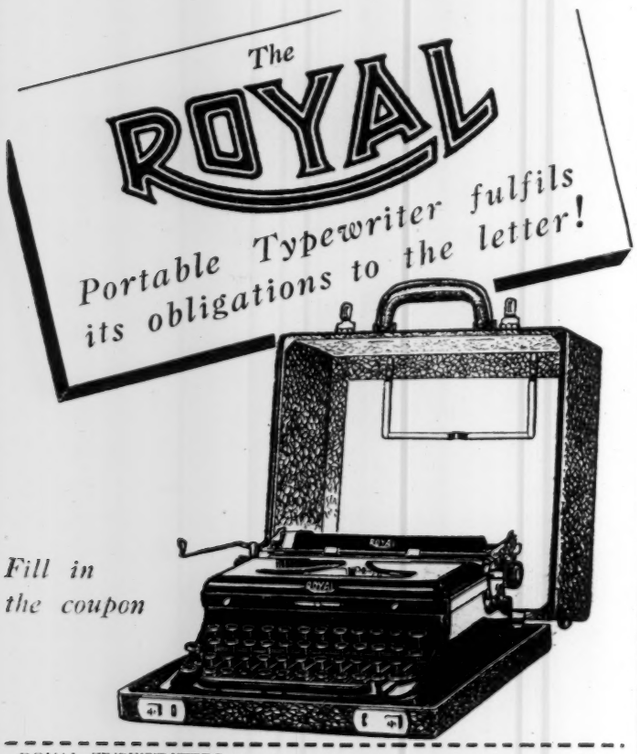
1. Envelopes should be marked with the number of the Problem, in the top left-hand corner, and should be addressed to COMPETITIONS, 10 Great Turnstile, High Holborn, W.C.1. Solutions must reach the Editor by first post on Friday, May 7.

2. Competitors may use a pseudonym. Typescript is not insisted on, but writing must be on one side of the paper only.

3. The Editor's decision is final. He reserves the right to print in part or as a whole any matter sent in, whether it be awarded a prize or not. MSS. cannot be returned. When no entries reach the required standard no prize will be awarded.

4. No competitor is eligible for more than one prize in any one week.

The result of the last week's competition will be announced in our next issue.



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RESULT OF COMPETITION No. 370

Set by Ivor Brown

A new Shakespeare play has recently been made by putting together selected passages and lines from several of Shakespeare's plays. We offer a First Prize of Two Guineas and a Second Prize of Half a Guinea for the best new Shakespeare Sonnet made of single lines taken unchanged from Shakespeare's Sonnets. In order to facilitate checking of lines, competitors should put opposite each line the number of the Sonnet from which it has been drawn.

Report by Ivor Brown

I soon repented of this competition for the simple reason that it set me such a huge and baffling problem. The entry was very big and many envelopes contained several sonnets, one competitor discharging a volley of seven. At any rate the competitors enjoyed themselves. It has been truly observed that no man can be entirely miserable who is sucking a chocolate caramel: so too, I fancy, no reader can be entirely bored who is rummaging amid Shakespeare's sonnets. This pastime was proved to be immensely popular and the Birthday Week was observed by great research and ingenuity in the composition of an eclectic sonnet. Nobody, of course, could really go far wrong, except those who were strangely ignorant as to the number of lines in a sonnet. After all, Shakespeare had broken the back of the work. What I should have foreseen was the impossibility of justly separating dozens of sonnets using more or less the same lines on more or less the same themes. There were several groups, the "look in your glass," the "promise of a beauteous day," the "restful death," the "time's fell hand," the "Will," the "mine eye and heart" and many of those who accepted one of these conventions turned out nearly similar results. Your assessor, distracted by his desk-load of almost identical pieces, finally resolved to select one of those which showed ingenuity in choosing new ground. So, with salutes to the energy and taste of the prolific Phyllida and A. P. R., not to mention the diffident contribution of a well-known Shakespearian editor, he votes for the cunning of Miss Ursula Torday. "Nyamok" is also most crafty and "Exceeded by the height of happier men" is brilliant in its place. But the rhyming of "again" with "men" is unpleasing and the last line weak. Therefore second prize must suffice. (Unfortunately there is not space for his entry.) Several competitors in this vein began "Come daily to the banks" and tried to keep on with financial metaphor. Their pluck was greater than their triumph.

FIRST PRIZE

TO THE ONLIE BEGETTER OF ELIZABETHAN LITERATURE: W. SHAKESPEARE TO F. BACON, BEGGING HIM TO DROP HIS INCOGNITO.

(38) Be thou the tenth Muse, ten times more in worth!
(39) Even for this, let us divided live;
(72) For I am shamed by that which I bring forth:
(4) The bounteous largess given thee to give.
(23) O'ercharged with burthen of mine own love's might,
(77) Those children nursed, deliver'd from thy brain,
(103) O, blame me not if I no more can write,—
(36) Let me confess that we two must be twain,
(6) Leaving thee living in posterity,
(70) Thy worth the greater, being woo'd of time:
(10) Make thee another self, for love of me,
(16) With means more blessed than my barren rime.
(146) So shalt thou feed on Death that feeds on men,
(85) In polisht form of well-refined pen.

URSULA TORDAY

CALIBAN'S PROBLEM CONTEST

PROBLEM 226.—THE FIFTH FORM AT ST. LOVADUC'S

"At the end of last term," writes my niece, Petunia, "each girl in the form put up a shilling. We decided, with the proceeds, to buy one present for our Headmistress, one for our Form Mistress, one for the Sports Mistress, and one for each of the five Prefects.

"The presents were to be bought at the shilling bazaar, where everything costs either one shilling, or a multiple of one shilling.

"We agreed that the five Prefects should all have similar presents;

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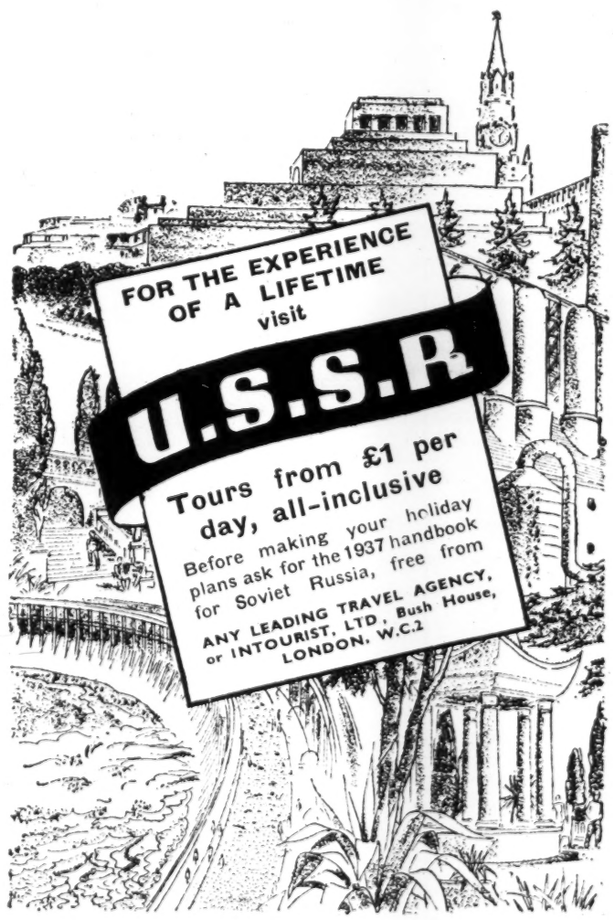
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The following holiday guides are obtainable from L M S or L·N·E·R offices and agencies: "*Scotland for the Holidays*," "*Land of Scott and Burns*," "*Clyde Coast and Loch Lomond*," "*Through the Trossachs*."

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IT'S QUICKER BY RAIL

also that the presents for the mistresses should be different in price from one another and from those bought for the Prefects.

"But having agreed this, we disagreed as to how much we should spend on the various recipients of our bounty. In the end, each of us put up a scheme. And, would you believe it, no two of us had the same scheme for the division of the money!

"Moreover, Geraldine (who is the form swot) declares that among us we had put up every possible scheme!"

How many girls are there in the form?

PROBLEM 224.—CHESS IN BARCHESTER

By C. H. O'D. Alexander

From the score, Alaska, Casabianca and Alkaline are group A, Hedgehogge is in B (can't be in C from comment "he never loses to lower-grade player"), Woodpusher and Batterremdown in B (from scores), Gaffer, Dunder and Buffer in C.

Alaska beat Casabianca, for if Alaska lost an "A" game he would score smaller total than Casabianca. We can now fill in Casabianca's score. Suppose that $2a$ is given for a win against same class player, $2b$ against player one class lower, $2c$ against player two classes lower ($2a$, $2b$, $2c$ to avoid fractions for drawn games). From Casabianca's score $2a + 6b + 6c = 24$ $\therefore a + 3b + 3c = 12$ and $a > b > c$ $\therefore c = 1$, $b = 2$, $a = 3$ $\therefore$ 6 points are scored for win *v.* same class, 4 for win *v.* one class lower, 2 for win *v.* two classes lower, Casabianca has dropped 6 points and $\therefore$ Alaska has dropped 5 $\therefore$ Alaska drew with Alkaline and lost to a grade C player (losing $3 + 2$ pts.) or lost to grade B player and drew with grade C player (losing $4 + 1$ pts.): but Alkaline cannot have drawn a grade A game as this would give him an odd number of points as total, whereas he has scored 14, $\therefore$ Alaska beat Alkaline, lost a "B" game and drew a "C" game. Alkaline, to get 14 points from his other 6 games, must have won 2 and drawn 1 of "B" games (10 pts.) and won 2 and lost 1 of "C" games (4 pts.).

Now consider "C" players. For beating "C" player they count 6, for beating "B" player *at least* 8 (7 would bring in fractions for draw) and for beating an A player *at least* 10. Dunder cannot have beaten Alkaline since this would give him *at least* 10 points + at least 6 for his 2 draws = 16 $\therefore$ Gaffer beat Alkaline and scored 10 points for it—for if he scored 12 his total would be at least $12 + 6$ (other win) $+ 3 + 3 = 24$ $\therefore$ C winning against A counts 10 and C winning against B (and $\therefore$ B winning against A) counts 8. Gaffer's score of 23 can now be made up only of $10 + 6 + 3 + 4$, i.e., his second win is against Dunder or Buffer. Buffer's score of 12 (3 draws) must be $3 + 4 + 5$ or $4 + 4 + 4$—but the latter means that he draws with *all* B players whereas nobody drew with Batterremdown $\therefore$ Buffer is the player who drew with Alaska. Hence Dunder's 14 from a win and 2 draws comes entirely from B and C players $\therefore$ it is $8 + 3 + 3$, i.e., Dunder drew with Buffer and Gaffer and beat a "B" player. $\therefore$ Gaffer beat Buffer.

Now "B" players. They have a win against Alaska, a draw against Alkaline and have lost the other games to "A"; they have a loss against Dunder, and a draw against Buffer and Gaffer in the C games and have won the rest. Batterremdown won at least 2 of his 3 "C" games (8 pts.) and his other 12 might be an "A" and "C" win or 2 "B" wins. If the former then he has a loss to Hedgehogge; from the secretary's remarks we know that Hedgehogge lost to none of the "C" players and he must have beaten Dunder (who drew no B games) $\therefore$ at best he would have an "A" draw, "B" and "C" win, 2 "C" draws $= 4 + 6 + 4 + 2 + 2 = 18$ too little. $\therefore$ Batterremdown won 2 B games and 2 C games, losing to all "A" players and Dunder. Hedgehogge to get his 19 must have an "A" win, a "C" win, a "B" and 2 "C" draws—$8 + 4 + 3 + 2 + 2 = 19$. We can therefore fill his and hence Woodpusher's scores, giving complete table.

	Ala.	C.	Alk.	Ba.	H.	W.	G.	D.	Bu.
Alaska	–	1	1	1	0	1	1	1	½
Casabianca ..	0	–	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Alkaline	0	0	–	1	1	½	0	1	1
Batterremdown ..	0	0	0	–	1	1	1	0	1
Hedgehogge ..	1	0	0	0	–	½	½	1	½
Woodpusher ..	0	0	½	0	½	–	1	1	1
Gaffer	0	0	1	0	½	0	–	½	1
Dunder	0	0	0	1	0	0	½	–	½
Buffer	½	0	0	0	½	0	0	½	–

PROBLEM 223.—MORE FROM M'BANGALAND

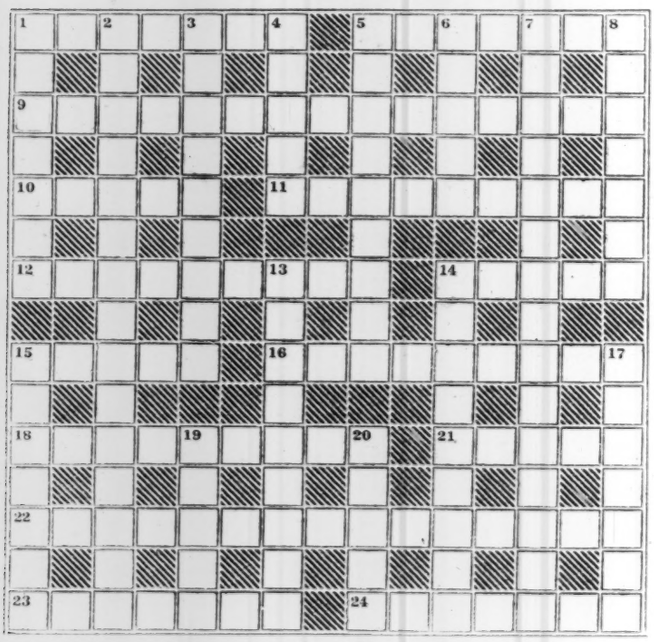
A set of Low's cartoons goes to: F. Minns, 13 Wharton Street, W.C.1. *Four* points are awarded.

[U.S.A. Competitors. The Editor regrets that the prizes offered in our Week-end Competitions cannot apply to American competitors.]

CALIBAN

WEEK-END CROSSWORD 373

Books to the value of Five Shillings may be chosen by the sender of the first correct solution opened. Post solutions to arrive not later than first delivery Wednesday following the date of issue, addressed to "CROSSWORDS," 10 Great Turnstile, London, W.C.1.



Set by L.-S.

The last week's winner is

Fred Bush, "Mellstock," E. Horsley, Leatherhead, Surrey.

ACROSS.

1. The coiner's scrap.
5. Talk of the grouse.
9. Badly executed work by a spinster?
10. It came back red.
11. The line the sundial takes.
12. Approved by the Chapter presumably.
14. Paid about 20/–.
15. Stevenson took them to heart.
16. Meal cutter.
18. They stand aside from the entrance.
21. A big order to stop.
22. Responsibility often carried on the Black's back in Africa.
23. Suggests a sole, though not a fish, out of water.
24. "Good-looking" people, of course.

DOWN.

1. Jewish version of half a tick?
2. Invariably issued at a premium.
3. Not Naval ratings as a rule.
4. Suffers in an ungainly manner.
5. He took Rome; now he takes the biscuit.
6. Recognised as a rough diamond, for instance.
7. Controls and seat of one horse-power transport.
8. Reversed anagram of $\frac{C}{A}$.
13. Seats from which to view a-bun-dance?
14. Purer meat arrived too soon.
15. In debt at the finish, though provided for.
17. A bit of inferiority complex tends to make one self-assertive.
19. Helps to make a pool.
20. How the law stops in Scotland.

LAST WEEK'S CROSSWORD

S	C	H	E	M	E	S	■	W	A	G	G	I	S	H
C	■	A	■	E	■	H	■	I	■	A	■	N	■	A
H	A	N	S	E	L	A	N	D	G	R	E	T	E	L
O	■	D	■	T	■	D	■	E	■	D	■	R	■	F
O	R	B	S	■	C	O	U	N	T	E	D	O	U	T
L	■	A	■	C	■	W	■	O	■	N	■	I	■	E
B	O	G	G	L	E	■	P	U	L	S	A	T	O	R
U	■	■	■	E	■	P	■	T	■	E	■	■	■	M
I	N	S	T	A	L	L	S	■	P	A	R	I	S	H
L	■	H	■	N	■	A	■	S	■	T	■	N	■	O
D	R	E	S	S	I	N	G	U	P	■	O	R	A	L
I	■	L	■	L	■	G	■	N	■	Z	■	O	■	I
N	I	T	R	A	T	E	■	S	T	E	W	A	R	D
G	■	E	■	T	■	N	■	E	■	R	■	D	■	A
S	U	R	R	E	P	T	I	T	I	O	U	S	L	Y

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THE WEEK IN THE CITY

By DIVES

THE MARKET SLUMP—BUDGET AFTERTHOUGHTS—DEFENCE BONDS—PETROL PRICE—WALL STREET OUTLOOK

LIQUIDATION of equities has produced this week conditions reminiscent of those of 1931. In markets already depressed by forced selling on the part of speculators caught by the collapse of the Commodity boomlet, the announcement of "N.D.C." was the last straw. The downward slide in the values of stocks which had previously looked sound and fully worth their price uncovered speculative positions right and left. Distressed selling produced its customary snow-ball results, affecting Wall Street and Paris as well as London. The concessions announced by the Chamber on Tuesday night failed to stem the tide of liquidation, and up to Thursday the decline appeared to be gathering momentum. It was generally agreed that the addition of extra years to the base period, or alternatively the promised right of the taxpayer to choose his base year out of several, might mitigate the unfairness involved in selecting as a basis for compiling "standard profits" a period which was for many concerns one of acutely sub-normal earnings. Moreover the concession of variable percentages, "proportioned to the needs of particular industries," instead of a rigid 6 per cent. "standard" yield on capital should safeguard to some extent the position of risky enterprises and mines, with their wasting assets. But until the Finance Bill is published we shall not know whether Mr. Chamberlain is prepared to deal with other apparent inequities. Will his definition of "capital" deal justly with the firm now beginning to enjoy the fruits of laboriously established and valuable but intangible goodwill, as compared with a business competitor whose chief asset is a hoarded mass of costly but obsolete plant? Will he insist on a tax which falls on companies operating abroad but with registered offices in London, to the exclusion of those similarly engaged but with registrations abroad? Is he really determined to favour pure *rentier*, at the expense of risk-bearing, capital? Until these obscurities are resolved, an atmosphere of uncertainty and apprehension is likely to impede not merely a sustained stock market revival, but the fruition of many plans for new issues and industrial expansion. Moreover, no matter how the incidence of the tax may be modified in detail, its principle—rightly described by Mr. J. M. Keynes as that of "taxing enterprise, growth and youth, as such"—will remain thoroughly vicious.

* * *

The Treasury's view of the distant trend of interest rates is evidently optimistic, since the first *tranche* of the National Defence Loan takes the form of £100,000,000 in 2½ per cent. Bonds issued at 99½, redeemable (by annual drawings at par of not less than £20,000,000) between 1944 and 1948. Apart from the fact that long-term borrowing for such unproductive and wasting assets as armaments would be open to serious criticism, the Chancellor was doubtless influenced by the consideration that the supply of medium-term stock available for the portfolios of banks and other financial institutions is relatively limited. At the same time the question may well be asked: if the Chancellor decided not to borrow "long," why present financial institutions with scrip yielding over 2½ per cent., instead of a real "short" at 1½ per cent. or less? If the average "life" of the Defence Bonds be put at 9½ years, the redemption yield is £2 11*s.* 3*d.* This compares with about £2 13*s.* 6*d.* obtainable on 2½ per cent. Conversion stock, 1944–49 and £2 17*s.* 6*d.* on Conversion Fives, whose redemption dates are 1944–64. In deciding on 1944–48 for the redemption of the first instalment of Defence Loans the Chancellor leaves himself free to refinance the 4½ Conversion stock in 1940 and the Conversion 5 per cent. in 1944, if conditions are propitious. The Bonds are unlikely to appeal greatly to the small investor, and the joint-stock banks seemed disinclined to take up much of the issue. It may be that Public Departments will have to "carry the baby" to some extent, but the Money Market will doubtless subscribe for a good deal of the stock, since its proceeds will accentuate the already pronounced shortage of Treasury bills.

* * *

Wall Street blamed London and the Continent for this week's slump—the worst which it has suffered for twelve months. London in turn blamed Paris and Paris no doubt blamed Budapest or Prague. The truth is that when the Continent gets into trouble London and New York are the only markets where liquidation of any size can be accomplished. I heard on Wednesday of 10,000 U.S. Steel being offered in Wall Street from London—a sum approaching £250,000. That London and Continental operators have been gambling too heavily in American securities was made apparent a month ago when the leading jobber in this market asked the brokers to reduce their Contangos, making no secret of the fact that he was carrying over £1,300,000 worth of American securities at the previous settlement. It was thought that London open positions had since been closed, but apparently the Continent, if not London, had a packet of American stocks to unload on Wall Street this week. In one day, for example, U.S. Steel fell nearly 10 points in spite of the publication of record earnings in the first quarter. American investors were less inclined to absorb European selling, because they have become dubious about the immediate trade outlook for their own country. Government experts have talked openly about an early seasonal recession in business activity, believing that industrial earnings for the first quarter of the year were at a temporary peak. Rising costs and increasing taxation are disturbing manufacturers and reacting unfavourably, it is said, on retail trade. And the gold scare has not yet been laid to rest in Wall Street. Washington is still greatly concerned about the inflow of gold, and although no hasty action is likely to be taken, the possibility of a gold revaluation has not been entirely ruled out. American industrial shares have now lost more than one-third of their advance since April, 1936. This is more than the usual extent of a major reaction in a long-term upward movement. If it goes much further it will give the pessimists ground for believing that the long-term trend has been reversed. Personally, I am against the pessimistic view. Wall Street is going through a very healthy correction of values, and if there are no important failures it will soon become stabilised on the basis of quite attractive earnings yields.

* * *

A further halfpenny on the price of petrol only revived oil shares momentarily. Another outbreak of liquidation quickly swamped the small amount of buying which came into the market. Even if petrol had doubled in price it would have had no lasting effect.

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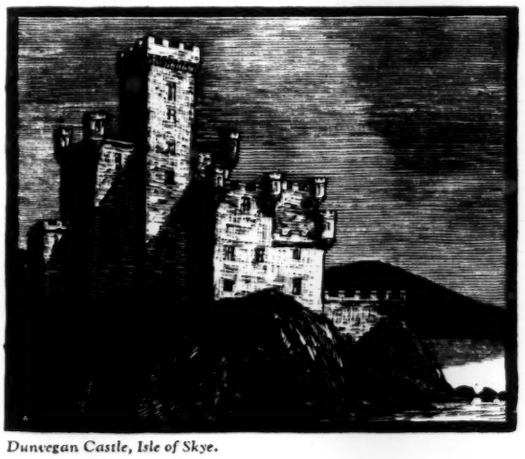
Until the uncertainties of the Excess Profits Tax are cleared up it is useless to estimate oil company profits, but since the beginning of the year petrol has been advanced by 1½*d.* per gallon, which would represent in a full year, if we could ignore N.D.C., about 12 per cent. extra on Anglo-Iranian ordinary shares, 38 per cent. on Trinidad Leaseholds, 69 per cent. on the £1 ordinary and 465 per cent. on the 1*s.* deferred shares of Petroleum Storage and Finance. (How these calculations are arrived at was explained in THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION on April 3rd.) It must not, of course, be assumed that 1½*d.* on petrol necessarily represents a clear 1½*d.* extra profit. The increase in petrol prices has been due to the rise in tanker freight rates. For example, at the end of last year the rate from the Gulf to Great Britain for clean tankers was 15*s.* per ton and to-day it is 35*s.* per ton. This does not greatly affect a company like Anglo-Iranian, which owns its own tanker fleet, but it is of some concern to Shell Transport which buys its petrol from the Canadian Eagle Oil Company on a c.i.f. basis, so that Canadian Eagle get the direct benefit of the rise in tanker rates and Shell only indirectly through their holding in Canadian Eagle. Arithmetic, however, is such a waste of time that the investor would do well to ignore the potential increase in earnings this year and contemplate the estimated dividends on the earnings for 1936:

	Price.	1935 Dividend.	1936* Estimated Dividend.	Estimated Dividend Yield %.
Shell Transport £1	5⅛ (ex bonus)	17½% net	20% net†	£5 4*s.* 0*d.*
Anglo-Iranian £1 ..	5 3/16	15%	20%	£3 17*s.* 0*d.*
Trinidad Leasehold £1	6⅜	25%	35%†	£5 9*s.* 9*d.*
Petroleum Storage £1 ..	5⅛	32%‡	30%	£5 17*s.* 0*d.*

* Calendar year except Trinidad Leaseholds, 1936/37 (June) and Petroleum Storage, 1936/37 (October). † On increased capital. ‡ Including 16% arrears.

These shares are only cheap if the dividends are up to market expectations. Incidentally, an exchange from Shell Transport to Royal Dutch is no escape from our E.P.D., as the two companies make their 60/40 distribution of operating profits *after* all taxes have been paid.



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Company Meeting

IMPERIAL CHEMICAL INDUSTRIES

LORD McGOWAN'S SPEECH — THE FIRST DECADE

THE Tenth Annual General Meeting of Imperial Chemical Industries Limited, was held on Thursday in London.

The Rt. Hon. Lord McGowan, K.B.E., D.C.L., LL.D., Chairman of the Company, said (in part):

The 7th December, 1936, marked the tenth anniversary of the formation of Imperial Chemical Industries Limited. There are certain occasions on which it is natural to look back and this Meeting which follows the completion of our first decade appears to me an appropriate moment for reflecting on what we set out to do and what we have accomplished.

There is little need to remind you that your Company was formed by merging the interests of the British Dyestuffs Corporation Limited, Messrs. Brunner Mond and Company Limited, Nobel Industries Limited and the United Alkali Company Limited, each of them companies with an established reputation running back, through their subsidiaries, for nearly a century. Since that time we have gathered to ourselves some forty other companies of varying magnitude and interest, engaged in cognate industries.

At the outset the merging of the four founding companies on the terms agreed gave us an issued capital of £56½ million. Before the recent reduction in capital the comparative figure was £77 million.

During the ten years only two new issues of capital for cash have been made, in 1928 and 1929, increasing the nominal capital by £15 million and furnishing the Company with cash resources of £21 million, the difference representing share premiums. On the other hand, we have paid off £7 million of debentures. The balance of the increase in nominal capital (£5½ million) represents the additional capital issued in exchange for the shares of other companies acquired during the period. Some £14½ million have been appropriated from profits to the General Reserve and the Central Obsolescence and Depreciation Fund, but there has been written off buildings, plant and other assets during the decade an almost equivalent amount, so that our Balance Sheet reserves to-day, amounting to £14½ million, equal approximately the share premiums I have just mentioned and the surplus arising on the liquidation of Nobel Industries, Limited. We have passed in this ten years through the depths of the greatest industrial and agricultural depression known in modern economic history, but have now, in common with the general industries of the country, returned to the level of reasonable prosperity at which we began. At no time did we fail to pay dividends out of profits. The average rate paid on the Ordinary Stock amounts to 7.2 per cent. per annum, and even at the lowest depth of the depression we were able to pay not less than 4½ per cent.

We have consistently maintained a policy of intensive research, directed to the improvement of existing processes, the discovery of fresh uses for existing products and the development of new processes and products.

We have continuously studied and pursued the policy of rationalisation and concentration which we originally set before us. During the ten years we have closed 38 factories and spent some £7 million on concentration schemes. Whenever labour has been displaced our policy has been as far as possible to transfer workers elsewhere and for the remainder to provide pensions or lump sum payments according to the length of service.

We have steadily followed a labour policy founded on friendship and our appreciation of the valuable part played by our workers through every section of our organisation. Our general relations with the various Trade Unions have been excellent, and a number of your Directors meet their leaders from time to time on our Trade Union Advisory Council. Co-operation with our workers has been consolidated through a system of Works Councils, by having our labour managers in each group whose work is co-ordinated by our chief labour officer at headquarters.

We are deeply sensible of our responsibility to the tens of thousands of human beings who are closely linked to our continued stability and prosperity, including not only the very large number of our employees, but the larger number of our stockholders, most of them holding but a few hundred pounds of stock, and our still more numerous customers. It is true, I think, to say that practically no man, woman or child in this country, and few industries, get through a single day without using, in some form, one or other of the products of I.C.I.

1936 AT HOME.

1936 was a year of growing industrial activity and therefore one of increasing demand for our products.

Building activity has been well maintained. Our interest in the building industry is not inconsiderable. Non-ferrous metals have always been required and we also manufacture paint, lime, cement, partition blocks, wall-board, and base boards, while a new wall covering "Decranite" has been developed. While plans for new housing show some falling off, this decline seems likely to be more than compensated by the growth in industrial and commercial building.

The prosperity of agriculture at home still lags behind that of general industry, notwithstanding the considerable measure of assistance which has been provided, directly and indirectly, by the Government. In consequence, total sales of fertilizer in this country show only a small upward movement, although the demand for the Company's special fertilizers has increased considerably. The growing interest in dried grass provides one encouraging feature.

Of the general progress of our ten manufacturing groups there is ample evidence in the Annual Report, and there is little for me to add. I want, however, to say something more in regard to the petrol plant at Billingham.

When we started this enterprise and planned an annual production of 100,000 tons of petrol from the hydrogenation of coal and 50,000 tons from tar oils, we knew that, particularly with regard to coal, we were pioneering in a new technical field and that we were therefore incurring all the attendant risks of such a step.

It was for this reason that we were not willing to invest some £3 million of new money until we had the assurance provided by the British Hydrocarbon Oils Production Act, 1934, of a continuance, within stated limits, of the protection afforded to home production by a Customs Duty on imported oil with no inland Excise Duty. It seems to be thought in some quarters that this Act of Parliament provides the Company with a subsidy of £1½ million per annum, that amount being calculated by applying the Customs Duty of £10 a ton to our planned production of 150,000 tons per annum. I need hardly assure you that our petrol production is no more subsidised by the existence of an Import Duty on petrol than the steel industry is subsidised by the existence of an Import Duty on steel ingots and castings. In other words, if we are to regard this enterprise as subsidised to the extent of £1½ million a year, then I calculate that steel production was subsidised in 1935 to the extent of some £30 million. This carries its own conclusion.

Questions are also continually put in the House of Commons asking whether this enterprise has been a commercial success and implying that the Company is under some obligation to the Government to supply detailed particulars of the financial results to date. There is no more warrant for this expectation than there would be for a similar demand on any manufacturer of any other product in this country which has the protection of a Customs Duty.

All that I can say in regard to the hydrogenation plant is that up to date it has not shown results which would justify its description as a good commercial proposition even with the advantage of the existing Customs Duty, and without that protection, of course, the enterprise would be uneconomic. We have met with more difficulties than we anticipated. That was one of the risks we knew we ran. Nevertheless, we have overcome first one trouble and then another, so that throughout last year there was a steady improvement in the working of the plant, while the personnel has become thoroughly familiar with the intricacies of the process. We are still convinced that we took a right decision when we embarked on this enterprise and we are satisfied that the hydrogenation system is the best technical and commercial process for the conversion, without creating by-products, of coal into motor spirit.

(1936 ABROAD.)

Visits abroad by your Directors have been more extensive than usual.

I have only just returned from an extended visit to Australia and New Zealand. Our subsidiary company, Imperial Chemical Industries of Australia and New Zealand, is making excellent progress. I was much impressed by the keenness in all ranks, and by the ability with which the administration is directed under the executive leadership of Sir Lennon Raws.

It has a wide range of interests, in explosives, alkali, leathercloth, ammonia, fertilizers, metals and ammunition. Our policy there, as elsewhere, is to co-operate with other large industrial interests. Recently we were asked by the Commonwealth Government to help in Australian defence, which we felt bound to do in view of our large interests there. Imperial Chemical Industries of Australia and New Zealand has accordingly participated in a new company, called the Commonwealth Aircraft Corporation Proprietary Limited. With a capital of £600,000 it intends to carry out the complete design and production of aircraft at a factory in Melbourne where the employment of some 600 skilled workers is expected.

In New Zealand also conditions are better, again mainly as a result of the improvement in the export prices of primary commodities.

Two notable events in the year bear upon our export trade. The first is the agreement reached between the United States of America, France and Great Britain to co-operate, through the instrumentality of their respective Exchange Equalisation Funds, for the purpose of avoiding any wide movements in the respective dollar, franc and sterling exchanges. That this agreement enabled France to devalue her currency with a minimum of disturbance, prompts the hope that it forms a basis upon which the world will in the course of time be able once more to build a stable exchange system.

The second and more important fact from our point of view is the marked rise in the price of primary and agricultural commodities. This will rapidly benefit the producing countries

(*Continued on page 752*)

London Amusements

MATINEES

All at 2.30 p.m. unless otherwise stated.

ALDWYCH. Jane Eyre. Wed., Thurs. & Sat.
APOLLO. London After Dark. Tu., Sat.
CAMBRIDGE. 1066 And All That. Th., Sat.
COLISEUM. On Your Toes. Wed., Th., Sat.
COMEDY. Busman's Honeymoon. Tu., F.
DRURY LANE. Careless Rapture. Wed., Sat.
DUCHESS. Mile Away Murder. Wed., Sat.
DUKE OF YORK'S. Night Alone. Wed., Sat.
GLOBE. "Candida." Wed. & Sat.
HIPPODROME. "Big Business." Th., Sat.
HIS MAJESTY'S. Balalaika. Wed. & Sat.
LITTLE. The Ascent of F.6. Th. & Sat., May 8.
MERCURY. In Theatre Street. Fri., Sat.
PLAYHOUSE. Whiteoaks. Wed., Th., Sat.
SAVILLE. Over She Goes. Sats.
SAVOY. And On We Go. Wed., Sat.
WESTMINSTER. Anna Christie. Wed., Sat.
WHITEHALL. Anthony & Anna. Wed., Sat.
WYNDHAM'S. George & Margaret. W., S.

THEATRES

ALDWYCH. Evgs., 8.30 (ex Mons.) Tem. 6404.
W., Th., S., 2.30. 2 extra Perfs. May 17, 2.30, 8.30.
JANE EYRE
CURIGWEN LEWIS. REGINALD TATE.

APOLLO. (Ger. 2663.) Evgs., 8.30. Tues. & Sat., 2.30.
MARION LORNE & WALTER HACKETT'S prodn.
LONDON AFTER DARK
by WALTER HACKETT.

CAMBRIDGE. Tem. Bar. 6056.
EVGS., 8.30. Mats., THURS., SATS., 2.30.
1066 AND ALL THAT
A Musical Revue of English History.

COLISEUM, Charing X. Tem. 3161. EVGS., 8.15.
Mats., WEDS., THURS., & SATS., 2.30.
"ON YOUR TOES"
JACK WHITING, OLIVE BLAKENEY, VERA ZORINA.

COMEDY. 8.30. Mats., Tues., Fri., 2.30. Whi. 2578.
2 extra Mats., May 15 & 17, at 2.30.
"BUSMAN'S HONEYMOON"
By DOROTHY L. SAYERS & M. ST. CLARE BYRNE.

DRURY LANE. Evgs., 8.0. Wed., Sat., 2.30.
IVOR NOVELLO, DOROTHY DICKSON,
ZENA DARE in
CARELESS RAPTURE

DUCHESS. (Tem. 8243.) 8.30, Wed., Sat., 2.30.
MILE AWAY MURDER
by ANTHONY ARMSTRONG
(Author of "*Ten Minute Alibi*").

DUKE OF YORK'S. Tem. 5122. 8.30, W., S., 2.30.
NIGHT ALONE
with RICHARD BIRD.
"A Night of Laughs."—*Daily Mail.*

GLOBE. Ger. 1592. Last 2 Wks. EVGS., 8.30.
Mats., WEDNESDAY & SATURDAY at 2.30.
BERNARD SHAW'S
"CANDIDA"

HIPPODROME. Ger. 3272. Evgs., 8.15.
Mats., Thurs., Sats., at 2.30. BOBBY HOWES in
"BIG BUSINESS"
VERA PEARCE. WYLIE WATSON. BERTHA BELMORE.

HIS MAJESTY'S. (Whi. 6606.) EVGS., 8.15.
BALALAIKA A Musical Play.
Mats., WEDNESDAYS & SATURDAYS, 2.30.

Some of the "New Statesman" readers who joined this Society recently have already received their first Dividend —at the rate of 7% per annum, as usual

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THE SAFE HIGH-YIELD INVESTMENT

THEATRES—continued.

LITTLE. Tem. 6501. 8.30. Thurs. & Sat. next, 2.30.
THE ASCENT OF F.6.
THE PLAY TO SEE. 1st Mat., Thurs., May 6.

MERCURY. Park 5700. 8.30 (ex. Mon.), F., S., 2.30.
IN THEATRE STREET
Comedy in Two Parts by Lenormand.
THE NEW MERCURY PLAY.

PHOENIX, Charing X Rd. Sunday, May 2nd, 8 p.m.
Waiting for Lefty. Where's That Bomb?
Tickets 6s. to 1s. from UNITY THEATRE CLUB, Britannia Street, W.C.1., TER. 3148; only to members SOCIALIST LEAGUE, I.L.P. and C.P., and UNITY THEATRE.

PLAYHOUSE. Whi. 7774. Evgs., 8.30 (Ex. Mon.).
W., Th., Sat., 2.30. 2 extra Perfs., May 17, 2.30, 8.30.
NANCY PRICE in
WHITEOAKS

SAVILLE. EVGS., 8.15. Mat., SATS., 2.30.
STANLEY LUPINO in
OVER SHE GOES
Musical Tantivy with LADDIE CLIFF.

SAVOY. Tem. 8888., Evgs., 8.30. Wed., Sat., 2.30.
Paul Murray presents
JUNE KNIGHT, in Robert Nesbitt's Revue,
AND ON WE GO

WESTMINSTER. Vic. 0283, 6/-, 3/6, 2/6 (bookable).
EVGS., 8.30. Mats., WED. & SAT., 2.30.
FLORA ROBSON in EUGENE O'NEILL'S
ANNA CHRISTIE

WHITEHALL. (Whi. 6692.) 2nd YEAR
8.30. Wed., Sat. & May 11 & 13, 2.30. (Smoking).
ANTHONY AND ANNA.
A Comedy by ST. JOHN ERVINE.

WYNDHAM'S. Tem. 3028, 3029.
EVGS., 8.30. MATS., WED. & SAT., at 2.30.
"GEORGE and MARGARET."
COMEDY by GERALD SAVORY.

CONCERT

MARK HAMBOURG
is resuming his MASTER CLASSES
for PIANOFORTE STUDENTS in the
beginning of MAY
For terms for these and for private tuition apply Sec., 43 Grove End Road, N.W.8.

REPERTORY THEATRES

CROYDON. Repertory.
Evenings 8. Sats., 5 & 8.15.
Heart's Content By W. Chetham Strode.

HULL. Little.
Evgs., 8. Mat., Sat., Thurs., 5 p.m.
Night Must Fall By Emlyn Williams.

LIVERPOOL. Playhouse.
Evgs., 7.45. Mat., Sat., 2.30.
Parnell By Elsie J. Schauffler.

MANCHESTER. Repertory.
Evgs., 7.30.
The Late Christopher Bean
By Emlyn Williams.

The Repertory Theatres whose announcements appear above are members of The Association of Repertory Theatres. *For information concerning Theatres belonging to this Association, or qualified to belong to it, apply to the Honorary Secretary, J. Baxter Somerville, Messrs. Baxter & Co., 12 Victoria St., London, S.W.1.*

PICTURE THEATRES

ACADEMY CINEMA, Oxford St. Ger. 2981.
WILLY FORST'S Great Dramatic Triumph,
BURGTHEATER (U).
With CARL ESMOND, WERNER KRAUSS,
OLGA TSCHECHOWA, HANS MOSER.

EVERYMAN (Opp. Hampstead Tube Stn.) Ham. 2285.
MONDAY, 3rd MAY, for SEVEN DAYS,
PAUL MUNI in
THE STORY OF LOUIS PASTEUR (A).
Also **The Private Life of the Gannets** (U).

RESTAURANTS

AH well, if you've not been to RULES you have missed a lot in life . . . Maiden Lane (Covent Garden). Lunch, Dinner, or late Supper (licensed till midnight). Est. 1780.

AT present known only to a few discerning folk, STUMPY'S RESTAURANT, Upper James St., Golden Sq., where for only 2s. 9d. you can get a really first-class five course dinner.

THIS paper may be read in "The Book" RESTAURANT and WINE DIVE facing the British Museum, also subscriptions received.

EXHIBITION

TO RAISE MONEY FOR SPAIN
SECURE FOR YOUR DISTRICT
THE SPANISH EXHIBITION
For information and list of
available dates apply to
SPANEX, 3 Victoria Street, S.W.1.

ART EXHIBITIONS, Etc.

ARTISTS' MARKET.
Special Exhibition
Four hundred years of English Glass.
PETER JONES, SLOANE SQUARE.

1937 EXHIBITION, 41 Grosvenor Square, W.1. Unity of Artists for Peace and Democracy. April 14th–May 5th, 10.30 a.m.—8.30 p.m. (including Sundays).
Vanessa Bell, Dali, Duncan Grant, John, Leger, Henry Moore, Miro, Moholy-Nagy, Paul Nash, Ben Nicholson, Picasso, Gilbert Spencer, etc.

ABSTRACT Paintings by RONDEL, NICHOLLS and BUHLER, at 32 Gloucester St., Victoria, S.W.1. Opening by PROF. MOHOLY-NAGY, May 6th, at 3 p.m. Come any time, any day. Tel.: Vic. 7327.

DANCES

U.L.S.S. MAY-DAY DANCE, 2s., 7.30. Victoria Hall, Bloomsbury Square.

GRAND CARNIVAL NON-STOP DANCE. Saturday, MAY 1st—7.30, at Victoria Hall, North Wing, Bloomsbury Square, W.C.1. First-class non-stop bands, licensed bar, beautifully sprung floor, attractive novelties and carnival. Russian handicrafts stall. Tickets 2s. 6d., at door, or from SOCIALS SEC., "Russia To-day," Friendship House, Little James Street, W.C.1.

FOR THE TABLE

COMING to EDINBURGH? MACKIE'S serve excellent meals in pleasant rooms at 108 Princes Street. Opposite the Castle.

KIMBERLEY Home Made Breakfast Tray Jams, Jellies and Marmalades NOW REDUCED to 3s. 3d. for 6 pots; 5s. 9d. for 12 pots, carriage paid. Whortleberry, Cherry, Peach, etc., included. HILDA KIMBERLEY, Gunnislake, Cornwall.

JAFFA Oranges—Case of 150 large 17s. Case 80 Grapefruit 17s. 6d. Case ½ Oranges, ½ Grapefruit, 17s. 6d. Carriage paid. P. B. GREENWAY AND CO., LTD., Imperial House, South St., E.C.2.

KIMBERLEY Home Made Jams, Jellies and Marmalades NOW REDUCED TO 1s. per lb. (6×1 lbs. Carriage Free). Whortleberry, Cherry, Peach, Pineapple, Blackcurrant, Loganberry, etc., included. HILDA KIMBERLEY, Gunnislake, Cornwall.

IMPERIAL CHEMICAL INDUSTRIES

(*Continued from page 750*)

concerned, notably the great overseas Dominions and South America, in all of which we have extensive interests.

It is reasonable to expect that with larger sterling resources derived from higher prices of these raw materials sold in Great Britain, the producing countries will be able to offer a larger market for British exports.

In Canada industry has continued on the upward trend which was a feature in 1935. The gold-mining industry has further expanded and is now one of Canada's major activities. Other mining enterprises, producing copper, lead, spelter and nickel, have also shown advances which have resulted in improved sales of explosives and accessories by Canadian Industries, Limited.

South Africa has continued to progress. Prosperity still attends the gold-mining industry and many new mines are being developed. The diamond situation has much improved. Greater activity has been witnessed in the mining of base metals, especially manganese and copper, both in the Union and Rhodesia. All this has meant an increasing demand for explosives and accessories and the sales of African Explosives & Industries, Limited, have reached a new high record. The considerable extensions to Modderfontein Factory in the Transvaal to which I referred last year have proceeded satisfactorily and are nearing completion. The pilot plant at Modderfontein for the manufacture of cyanide is on the point of commencing operations. After lengthy negotiations with the Union Government, we have been asked to erect and start up for them a .303 ammunition factory in South Africa.

Agricultural conditions in South Africa were better last year, mainly owing to higher prices. Our Company's sales of fertilizers have been well maintained, while progress is being made with the sale of pest control products.

In the Far East, conditions in Japan, looked at generally, cannot be said to improve. As regards our own trade, I may say that the steps which I informed you last year we were taking to maintain our volume of business have been successful, but a vigorous and determined price policy has been needed to check the expansion of Japanese exports. We shall continue this policy until such time as manufacturers in Japan find it possible to negotiate with us.

In China trading conditions, notwithstanding the perplexing political situation, have on the whole improved. The new monetary policy, which involved the abandonment of the silver standard, has had a beneficial effect not only internally but on China's balance of trade.

In the Near East the situation has been exceptionally difficult. We welcome the satisfactory conclusion of a treaty with Egypt and the negotiation of a new trade and clearing agreement with Turkey, which we trust will tend to improve the economic relations of both those countries with Great Britain. The lamentable disturbances in Palestine and the unrest in adjacent territories have made the pursuit of trade in those areas unusually difficult. I sincerely hope that as the result of the work of the Royal Commission in Palestine and the policy adopted by His Majesty's Government in regard to the mandate, peaceful conditions will be restored and the course of progress and prosperity of the country which has been so marked in recent years will recommence.

Nearer home, conditions in Spain have caused us much anxiety. We had large funds held up in the form of blocked peseta balances, arising out of our various sales in that country of fertilisers, dyes and general chemicals. The situation was improved by the conclusion of the Anglo-Spanish Clearing Agreement, under which we recovered considerable sums, but the civil war suspended its operation. Our enterprises there have been almost entirely in abeyance, the rate of exchange has fallen seriously, and losses are to be apprehended through the seizure of buildings and other assets.

PROFITS.

The Company's net profits show a further moderate increase of £197,000, or 7 per cent., after providing £1,000,000 for the Central Obsolescence and Depreciation Fund and the necessary amount for the Company's income-tax.

The Board have appropriated £1,500,000 to the General Reserve, and have also this year put aside another £150,000 for the Workers' Pension Fund. This leaves £5,553,000, which, with the £639,000 brought forward from last year, makes a total of £6,192,000 available for dividend and carry forward. The Preference Dividend of £1,591,000 was paid on the due dates, leaving a balance of £4,601,000.

Following the reorganisation of the Company's Capital, which now consists of Preference and Ordinary Stock only, the dividend policy of the Company has become simplified. Out of the balance stated above the Board recommend a final dividend of 5½ per cent. on the Ordinary Stock, which, with the 2½ per cent. interim dividend already paid makes a total dividend for the year of 8 per cent. on that stock. The ordinary dividend requires a sum of £3,936,000, which will leave £665,000 to be carried forward to 1937.

The increase in the year's net income corresponds almost exactly to the additional appropriation to the General Reserve. In taking this course, the Board are continuing their conservative financial policy. The present time of prosperity cannot be permanent and we shall, in time, face a diminishing volume of business.

Therefore, it is essential that industrial corporations should take advantage of existing good conditions to put their house in order; that they should, out of to-day's surplus earnings, equip themselves with the most up-to-date plant procurable, so that they shall have the lowest operating cost possible. They will then continue to be competitive with the rest of the world. A corollary to what I have said is the necessity, in my opinion, of spending more and more on research. Industrialists are trustees, not only for their shareholders, but for their workers; the prosperity of an industry, and its stability over a long period of years, rest ultimately upon keeping level with the general front of research. I trust that our stockholders will endorse the long view that has been taken by the Board.

BALANCE SHEET.

As stated in the Annual Report, the litigation in regard to the Company's Capital reorganisation scheme came to an end in the middle of November last by the decision of the House of Lords to dismiss the final Appeal of the Committee representing certain Deferred Stockholders. The Scheme was formally brought into effect, as stated in the Annual Report, by the withdrawal of the Stock Exchange quotation of Deferred Stock, and by the payment to the former Deferred Stockholders of the suspended dividends on the new Ordinary Stock issued in exchange for the former Deferred Stock.

At the 31st December, 1935, the Board carried the amount of £5,434,000 by which the Company's Capital was reduced to the Capital Reserve, in accordance with the Resolutions passed at the Extraordinary General Meeting on the 1st May, 1935, pending the subsequent decision of the Board in regard to this sum when the final result of the Company's Petition was known. During the hearing in the House of Lords and in the Lower Courts, apprehension was expressed by Counsel for the opposing Deferred Stockholders in regard to the possible distribution of this sum by way of a bonus issue of shares, the major part of which would inure to the benefit of the Ordinary Stockholders.

While the Board have always disclaimed any intention to use this sum in such a manner, the Resolutions passed at the Extraordinary General Meeting referred to were wide enough to permit of that course. To put this issue beyond further dispute, the Board have decided, after making their usual annual review of the values of the Company's plants and other assets held through the wholly-owned Subsidiary Companies, to apply it, together with further sums drawn from the Company's reserves, to writing down fixed assets and investments as represented by shares and debentures in and advances to Subsidiary Companies. The total amount to be so written off is £6,934,000, of which £5,434,000 has been provided by the reduction in Capital, £500,000 by the Free Reserve and £1,000,000 by the Central Obsolescence and Depreciation Fund.

These heavy writings off have been applied in the main to the value of works at home concerned with the production of nitrogen, petrol, etc., and abroad to dealing with the present decline of our businesses in Spain and Palestine, and our Foreign Merchanting Companies as a whole, as a result of currency depreciation and competition.

STAFF AND LABOUR RELATIONS.

The Annual Report refers to certain agreements we have entered into with the Trade Unions, to which I attach great importance. The craftsmen affected have been brought into closer contact with our industry and their wages will in future be settled by agreements between their Unions and ourselves, instead of being directly governed by conditions in various other industries. The Unions conducted these negotiations with us in a spirit of frankness and friendly understanding, which we much appreciated.

The new Pension Scheme was explained to the workers by their representatives on the Works Councils, and each was asked to indicate if he or she were willing to become a member if such a scheme were inaugurated. I am pleased to tell you that 99 per cent. of the eligible male workers, 86 per cent. of the eligible female workers, or overall 98 per cent. of the total made application to join the Fund. With this knowledge in their possession, the Board inaugurated the Fund on the 4th January, 1937, on a basis of joint contributions payable by the employer and the employee.

PROSPECTS FOR 1937.

With the world wide tendency to rising commodity prices upon which I have already remarked, with a policy of rearmament, and with no likelihood of any serious setback in general building activity, there seems to be no reason to anticipate any decline in 1937 in the general level of the country's activity. It does not, of course, follow that profits will show the same tendency. We have to face notable rises in the prices of our raw materials, and the increases in wages will add substantially to our costs.

You may rest assured that as in the past the efforts of the whole organisation will lie behind the desire to meet you next year with a Balance Sheet and Report which you will regard as satisfactory in the conditions which have appertained. I am quite content with the recorded results to date.

OFFER TO SALT UNION.

I must add a few words in regard to negotiations which have taken place for an offer by your Company to the Stockholders in the Salt Union Limited to acquire their stock. There has been a close alliance between the Salt Union and your Company for a great many years. This association has latterly brought the interests into closer relation, and the time has now come when, in the opinion of both Boards, it would be to the interest of their Stockholders to make that association permanent. We have every hope that the Salt Union Stockholders will accept the terms of exchange offered to them.

The Report and Accounts were adopted.

APPOINTMENTS VACANT & WANTED

UNIVERSITY COLLEGE OF SWANSEA.

The Council invites applications for the post of Assistant Lecturer in the department of Classics. Salary £300 per annum. The appointment will date from October 1st, 1937.

Further particulars may be obtained from the undersigned, by whom applications must be received on or before May 15th, 1937.

EDWIN DREW,
Registrar.

Singleton Park, Swansea.

COUNTY COUNCIL OF THE COUNTY OF LANARK
EDUCATION COMMITTEE
COUNTY LIBRARIES—LARKHALL DISTRICT LIBRARY.

Applications are invited for the undernoted appointments in Larkhall District Library.

ASSISTANT-IN-CHARGE (MALE).

Applicants must have experience in the administration of public libraries and preference will be given to those holding the qualifications of the Library Association. Commencing salary £160 rising by increments of £10 to £190 per annum.

ASSISTANT (FEMALE).

Applicants should have public library experience and preference will be given to those with experience of library work with children. Commencing salary £80 rising by increments of £10 to £100 per annum.

These appointments will be designated under the Local Government and Other Officers' Superannuation Act, 1922, and successful applicants must undergo medical examination prior to appointment. Applications with copies of testimonials should be lodged with the undersigned not later than May 7th, 1937.

Lanarkshire House,
191, Ingram Street,
Glasgow, C.1.
April 23rd, 1937.

R. C. T. MAIR,
Director of Education
and Deputy County Clerk.

FOR SALE, TO LET AND WANTED

SUN ALL DAY. Hilltop situation between FARNHAM and FRENSHAM. Modern house for sale; 2 recep., 4 bed, all main services, cent. heating, garage, terraced garden and heathland. Box 725, N.S. & N., 10 Gt. Turnstile, London, W.C.1; or 'phone: Farnham (Surrey) 6049.

FREEHOLD, £1,575. Small house, Bayswater. Quiet, pretty unfashionable street. Completely modernised, charmingly decorated. Sunk garden abolishes basement. Central heating; 7–8 rooms, large kitchen, nice bathroom, 2 w.c.s. Built-in furniture. Box 726, N.S. & N., 10 Gt. Turnstile, London, W.C.1.

COTTAGE to let in Thames-side secluded village, 50 miles London, 10 Oxford, for 6–8 weeks from July 15th. Simply furnd., 5 bedrms (7 beds), bath, electricity, 'phone. 5 *guineas* p.w. 'Phone business hours NAT. 7234 or write Box 674, N.S. & N., 10 Gt. Turnstile, London, W.C.1.

SUFFOLK BORDER. Small furnished cottage, to let, sleep three, near Constable country. Rent 15s. Box 739, N.S. & N., 10 Gt. Turnstile, London, W.C.1. Telephone: Bures 267.

15s. per week, incl. e.l.; peaceful, comfy divan bed-sitting-room. Suit student. 5 mins. Russell Sq. Apply 7 Mecklenburgh St., W.C.1. Ter. 4821.

HOLLAND PARK. Modern Rooms with Breakfast, 25s. Constant hot water. 1 min. Central London Tube. 19 Clarendon Road. Park 7016.

SMALL QUEEN ANNE HOUSE, Cranborne Chase, Dorset. 4 bedrooms, 3 sitting-rooms, bathroom. Electric light and cooker, plate and linen. Well-stocked garden; large garage. 7 miles from Shaftesbury. To be let furnished for May; £1 a week to careful tenant. Apply WORDSWORTH, Bishopstone, Salisbury.

SWISS COTTAGE, near Embassy. Unfurnished, delightful living room or studio. Completely redecorated house. 12s. 6d., 17s. 6d., 21s. Sunny attic flat, 2 rooms, kitchen, box-room 25s. Large garden room and kitchenette, 25s. Capable housekeeper, service optional. 19 Crossfield Road, N.W.3. Tel.: PRI. 6139.

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